aturday Evening Post · September 9, 1967 · 35c

POST

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What's wrong with
CITY SCHOOLS

The threat to
OUR WILDLIFE

Eric Ambler's
DIRTY STORY part 2

THE QUINTS An all-day picnic

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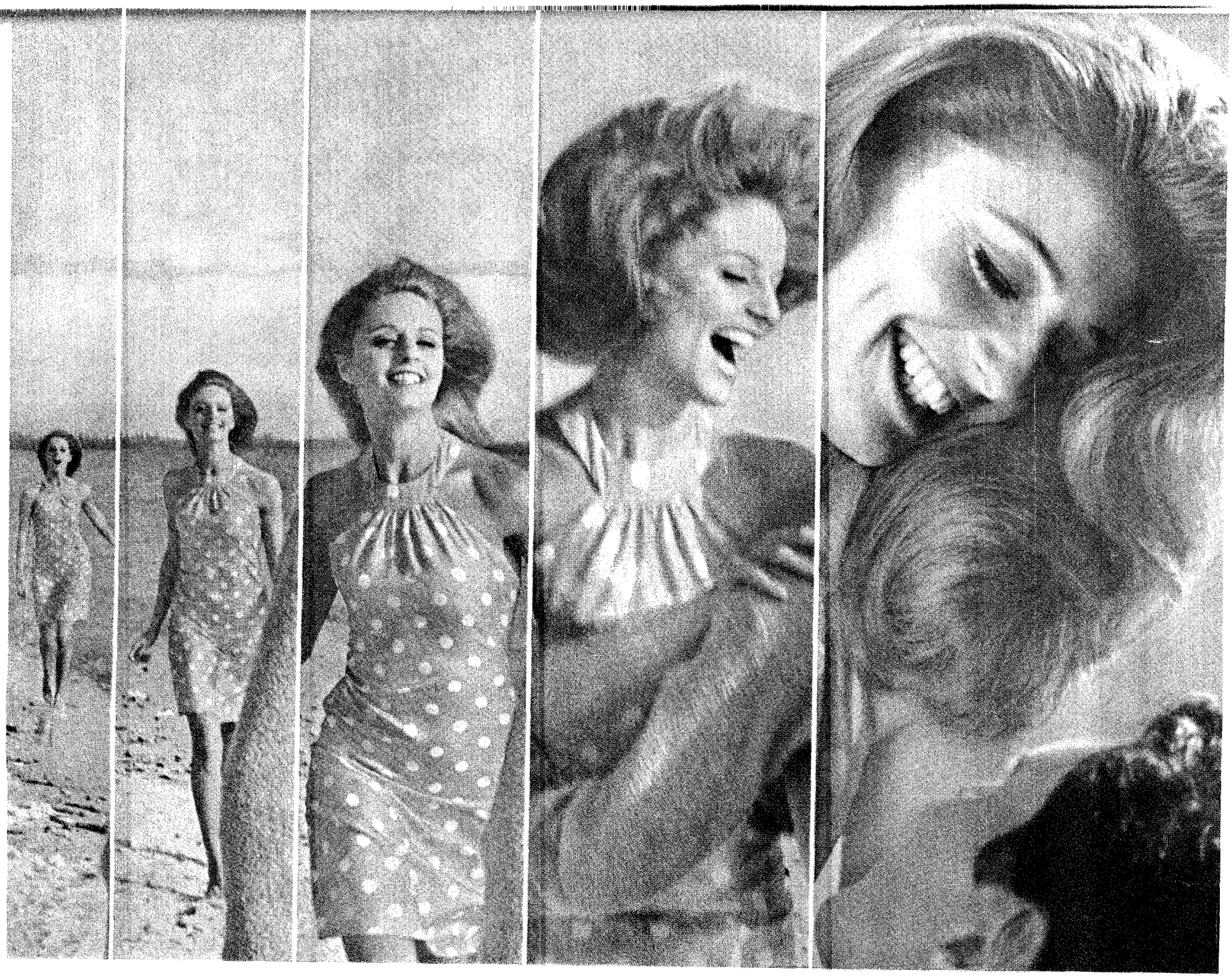

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The Saturday Evening
POST

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IN THIS ISSUE

September 9, 1967 • 240th year, issue no. 18

Articles

I like to risk my life *(Speaking Out)* . . . . . *A. Alvarez* 10
'Mr. Genocide' *(Affairs of State)* . . . . . *Stewart Alsop* 14
The love wave *(The Human Comedy)* . . . . . *Calvin Tomkins* 16
Shipping out *(Points West)* . . . . . *John Gregory Dunne* 18
What's wrong with our big-city schools . . . . . *Martin Mayer* 21
The quints on a picnic . . . . . *Ann Bayer* 24
A close look at wildlife in America . . . . . *Bil Gilbert* 32
Letter from Saigon . . . . . *Trevor Armbrister* 64
Don't dig in on Gentleman Jim . . . . . *William Craig* 70

Fiction

Dirty Story *(Part II)* . . . . . *Eric Ambler* 50

Departments

Letters . . . 4 My kind of people *(Cartoons)* . . . 49 America, America . . . 52
Post scripts . . . 62 Hazel . . . 68 Editorial . . . 74 Cover . . . *By John Launois*

From the Editor

There is a deep note of frustration and despair in Martin Mayer's article, page 21, WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR BIG-CITY SCHOOLS. The author sums up his five years on a New York school board by admitting, "The battle is over and I lost," and I am afraid that this echoes the pessimism of most of those who try to educate the millions of children who come to school without the preparation for an education.

Not all efforts to salvage the future of our disadvantaged children are failing, however. I was fortunate enough to look in on a success this summer when, almost accidentally, I spent the day with the children in the Head Start program at the Child Development Center in Pickens County, near Tate, Ga. I won't forget it soon.

"You'll know the school when you see it—it looks like something out of *The Sound of Music*," one of the teachers, Mrs. John Cagle, told me. I found it, a modern schoolhouse with large airy rooms, cradled in a circle of mountains. But the really interesting view was inside, where small groups of children were totally involved in learning about a world they had never known. From the remote coves and hollows, many of the children did not know the words for "nose," "fingers," "car," "oranges." Some had never brushed their teeth; some had never had a bath in their lives. All of a sudden they were catching up.

Mrs. Cagle told of one child who had to be held and comforted for two days before he was composed enough to join the group. "He had never been out of his own cabin; he had never seen anybody but his own family in his life," she explained. There was another four-year-old who was allowed to bring his own personal can of snuff every day until he was weaned from it. Finally, the tiny world of these children is slowly expanded and they begin to accept the other human beings around them.

Mr. Willis Rackley, custodian and bus driver for the school, told of a small student who had never spoken at school. "One morning he got on my bus and handed me a rose. 'Good morning, Mr. Rackley,' he said. 'I have brought you a bouquet.' I wore that rose until all of the petals fell off," Rackley says.

After the annual trip to the zoo in Atlanta, one teacher asked the children what they liked best. "I liked them limes and them cute little cups," one boy said soulfully. Finally, the teacher discovered it was the lions and the bear cubs that had captured the child's heart. And it is this process of discovery that will salvage many of these children in the end.

Bill Emerson

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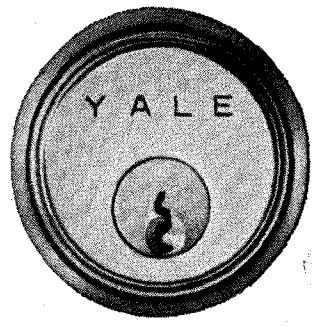

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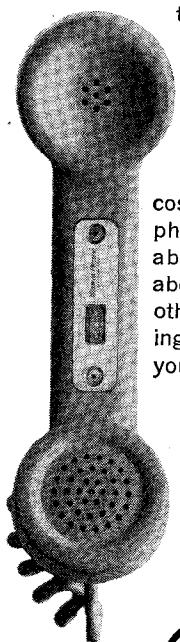

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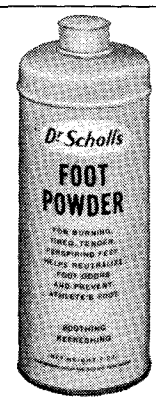

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Letters

Helping children learn

Dear Sirs:

I have just finished reading John Bird's article WHEN CHILDREN CAN'T LEARN, in your July 29 issue, and I feel that this article is by far the best ever published on the Doman-Delacato method. It gave me great pride to read it, for both my younger sister and myself have been helped by the Institutes—I was helped by the reading-disability program, and my sister, born with brain injury, has been helped to reach heights that a few years ago were believed unattainable for her.

ANDREW BERGSTEIN
Mercersburg, Pa.

Sir:

John Bird's article on Drs. Doman and Delacato, and the role of the University of Plano in their program, performs a great national service and explains well this breakthrough in education.

ROBERT MORRIS, PRESIDENT
University of Plano
Plano, Tex.

Dear Sirs:

Your article is deceiving to parents who are desperately looking for help. I do not feel publicity should be obtained prior to a suitable large-scale study of this method.

SUE OPPLIGER
Shreveport, La.

Dear Sir:

Thank you for your interesting article. There are so many youngsters with such varied learning disabilities that each contribution of this type takes us one step closer to our ultimate goal in education—successful learning for each particular child.

BARBARA MALLERY
Baltimore, Md.

Florida's governor

Sirs:

Thanks for Marshall Frady's incisive etching of Florida's Gov. Claude Kirk ['IT IS A JOYOUS THING TO BE A KIRK REPUBLICAN!', July 29]. The article gave those of us far from Florida a penetrating look at this new arrival on the American political scene.

SHIRLEY DOUGLAS
Milwaukee, Wis.

Sirs:

The sublime conceit of Mr. Frady's article! It is the acme of bad taste, bad manners and poor journalistic expression. Florida can do well without Mr. Frady—and, incidentally, the publishers of this type of propaganda.

JOHN C. BEARD
Sarasota, Fla.

Gentlemen:

Illuminating indeed is your articl Florida's governor is determined t push himself into the national vic presidential scene at the expense his state. Let's hope he succeeds, s that Florida will be rid of him.

WATSON DUNCAN I
Lake Worth, Fl

Free-wheeling editor

Dear Mr. Emerson:

I want to tell you how much I en joyed your FROM THE EDITOR colum on bicycling in the July 29 *Post*.

Three years ago, after an experi mental tour of New England with group of 40 adults, some of us forme the International Bicycle Tourin Society, which now has hundreds members. You might want to join u

DR. CLIFFORD L. GRAVE
La Jolla, Cali

Points West

Dear Sir:

The POINTS WEST pieces by Joa Didion and John Gregory Dunn rank, in my estimation, at the top the list of regular columns publishe by major American magazines. M wife and I consider the work of thi young couple to be uncommonl bracing, insightful and intelligen The recent HALFWAY HOME [Jul 15] and THE SEACOAST OF DESPAI [July 29] were especially fine ex amples of their perception and abilit to articulate.

WILLIAM R. WILLIAM
Berkeley, Cali

Dear Sir:

The era of Ochre Court in New port, R.I., is long since dead; bu since Joan Didion, in her article TH SEACOAST OF DESPAIR, has taken i upon herself to exhume the body an spit on the bones, I think she de serves an answer. Ochre Court wa the home of my grandparents, Mr and Mrs. Ogden Goelet.

The tone of the article implies tha the owners of such houses evidence blatant vulgarity and ostentation t the point of inducing physical nause in the modern spectator. May I re mind Miss Didion that beauty is i the eye of the beholder. As to th charge of ostentation, this is purely matter of totem: in today's status striving generation, the equivalent o Ochre Court would be a Jaguar, iden tification with various country club or smart resorts abroad, etc., etc. would not presume to accuse Mis Didion of vulgarity were she to sub scribe to any of the above-mentione values, which I personally conside false.

PETER GOELE
New York, N.Y

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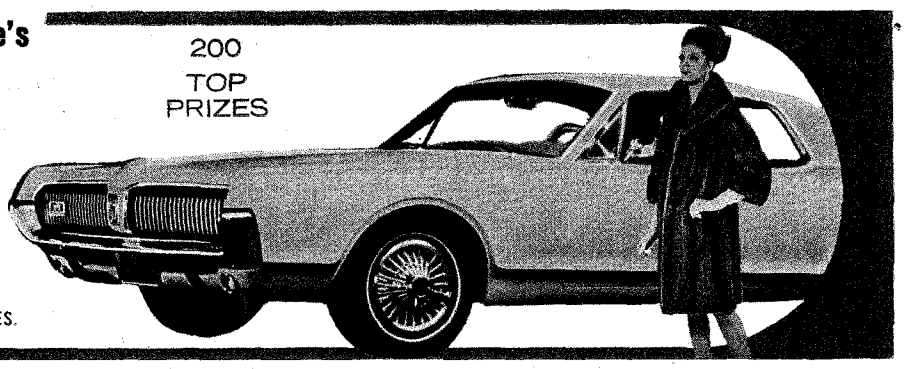

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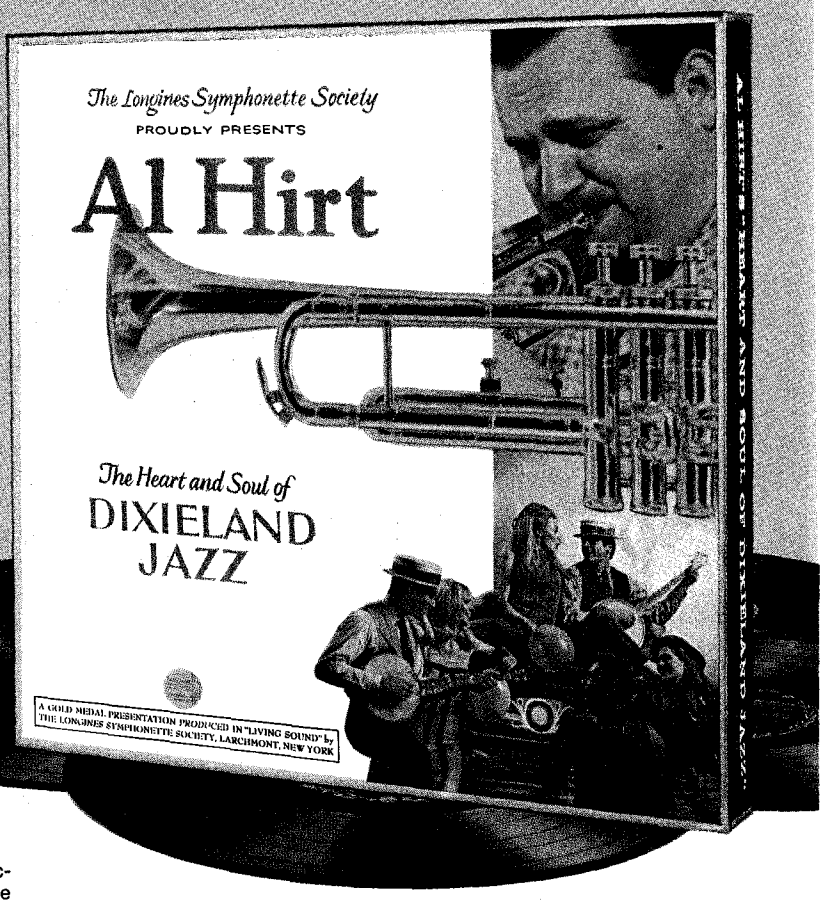
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New Orleans
Deep River
Tailgate Ramble
Look Down That Lonesome Road
Stumblin'
Battle Hymn of the Republic
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When the Saints Go Marchin' In
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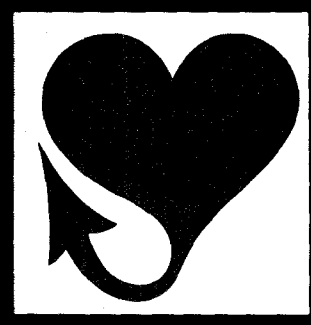

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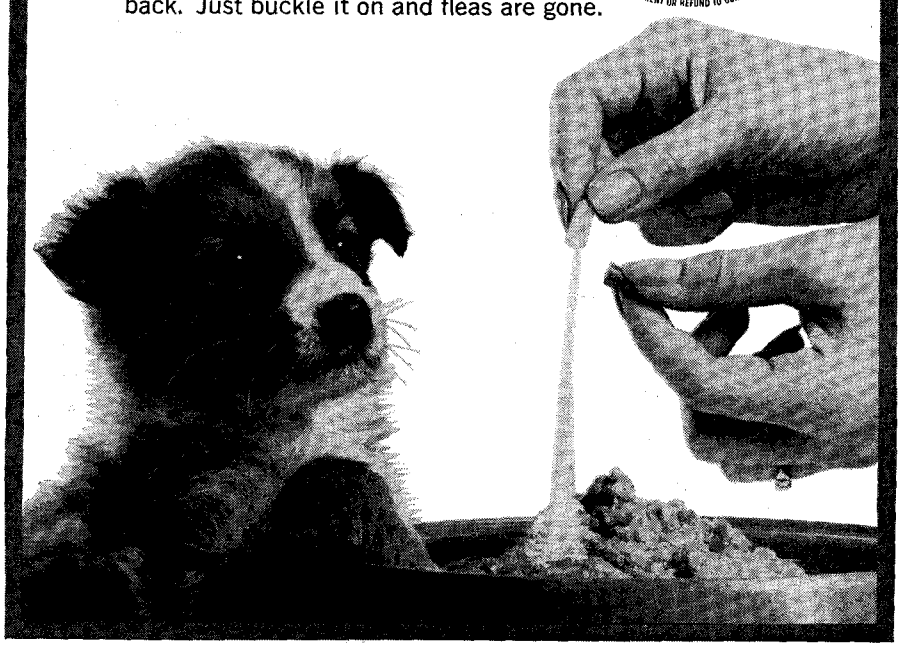

Letters

Cleveland ghetto

Dear Sir:

Compliments on your fine July 29 issue. John Skow's article CAN CLEVELAND ESCAPE BURNING? was one of the best (if not *the* best) I have read on the Negro ghettos and attempts by big-city officials to ignore the problem. It was a joy to read such a fine, perceptive, hard-hitting article.

CAROL JOHNSON
New York, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

Who created and still creates the slum areas? Who dumped their garbage in the streets? And, most important, whose responsibility is it to clean it up? Acceptance of personal responsibility for one's actions is ultimately the only solution to the problem.

FRED REINBURG
Chowchilla, Calif.

Gentlemen:

Mr. Skow seems to feel it is somehow wicked for ethnic groups to wish to be left alone. Must Italian "cosmos," for example, be forced to live with non-Italians even if they don't want to? Strange doctrine for a country that professes to be freedom-loving—why not shoot the works and demand that squares move in with hippies?

R. DUNN
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

We in the suburbs of Cleveland have been ignoring the problems of the dying monster; but John Skow's comprehensive article makes Cleveland's slum conditions harder to ignore. However, I am sure that most of us suburbanites will continue to blot Cleveland out of our minds, while slums blot Cleveland out of cityhood.

TIM ADAM
Bedford, Ohio

Winning the war

Dear Sirs:

Congratulations to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge for his article WE'RE WINNING IN VIETNAM in the July 29 issue. Our fighting men are doing a fine job on the battlefield, and I'm glad to see credit given where credit is due.

GEORGE CARR
Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Sir:

Ambassador Lodge's litany of achievements (woefully negligible in the light of five long years in Vietnam) comes across as an attempt to boost the morale of a growing number of Americans who are convinced that our involvement in Vietnam can never be justified in terms of either practicality or morality.

With thousands of U.S. citizens starving, and insurrection rampant within our *own* borders, I feel doubly certain that our country is waging the wrong war in the wrong place.

KATHARINE K. FAULKNER
Houston, Tex.

Sir:

If our military performance has been "magnificent" and we are winning, then why are 140,000 more soldiers asked for by General Westmoreland?

JAMES J. PIERSON
Pittsfield, Ill.

Life with the dudes

Dear Sirs:

As an ex-wrangler and a native Coloradoan whose routine way of life is fending off voracious wood ticks, clambering over cliffs, being sucked in by muddy river bottoms and urging my stalwart steed ever onward and upward, I was thoroughly engaged by BIG DUDE DRIVE IN THE CRAZIES [July 29]. Writer Anne Chamberlin writes with real humor and considerable insight about all aspects of the "dude situation."

SHEILA BACHAR
Denver, Colo.

Gentlemen:

Your piece took me back to the summer of 1925, when I made the dudes' beds, served as waitress and washed dishes on the same Lazy K Bar Ranch that your writer visited.

Anne Chamberlin's story is like a letter from an old acquaintance. It reminds me that dudes haven't changed much with the years, and that the Sweet Grass country of Montana is still vast and unspoiled. Thank you for reviving for me such pleasant memories.

FRANCES E. MCDANEL
Beaver Falls, Pa.

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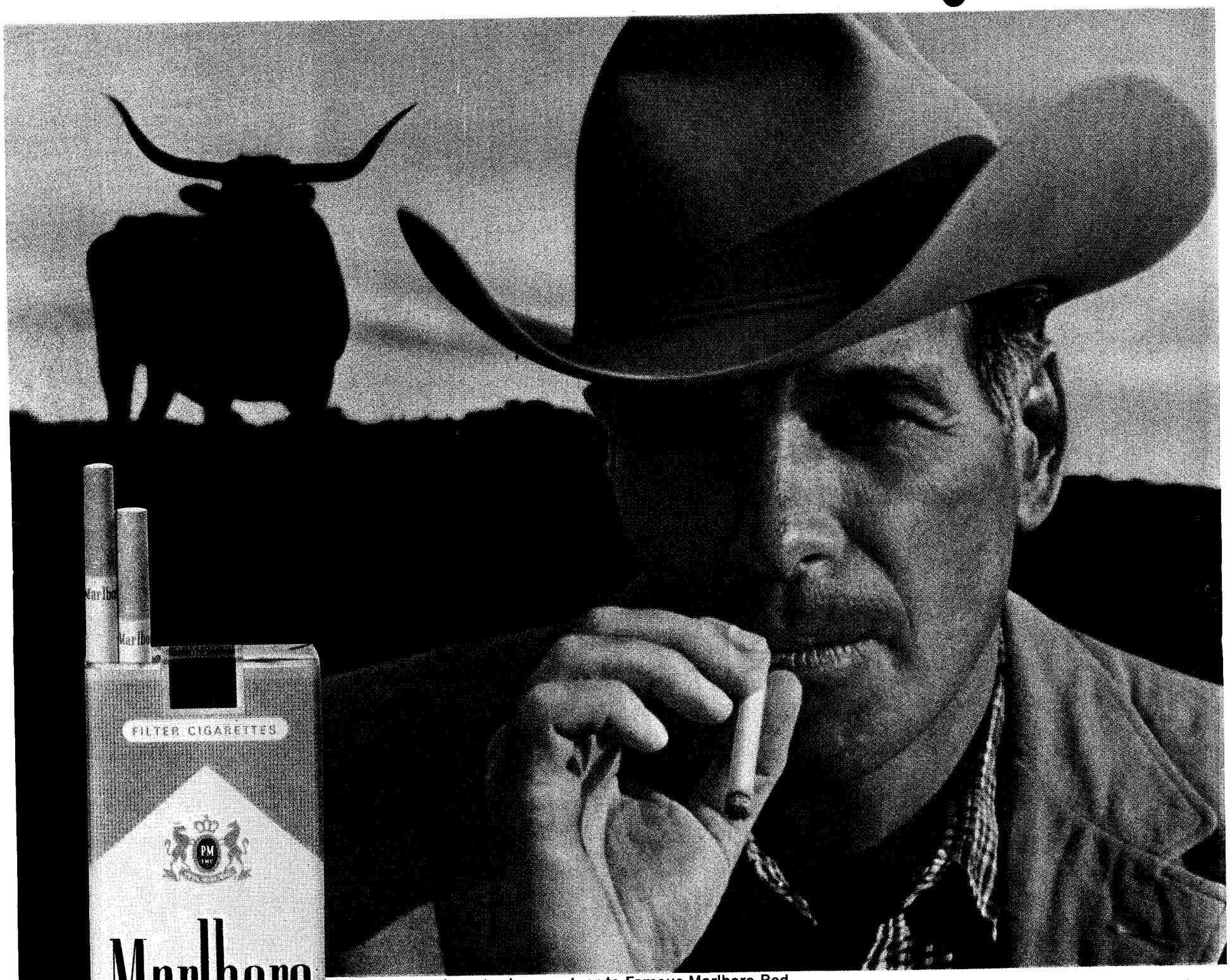

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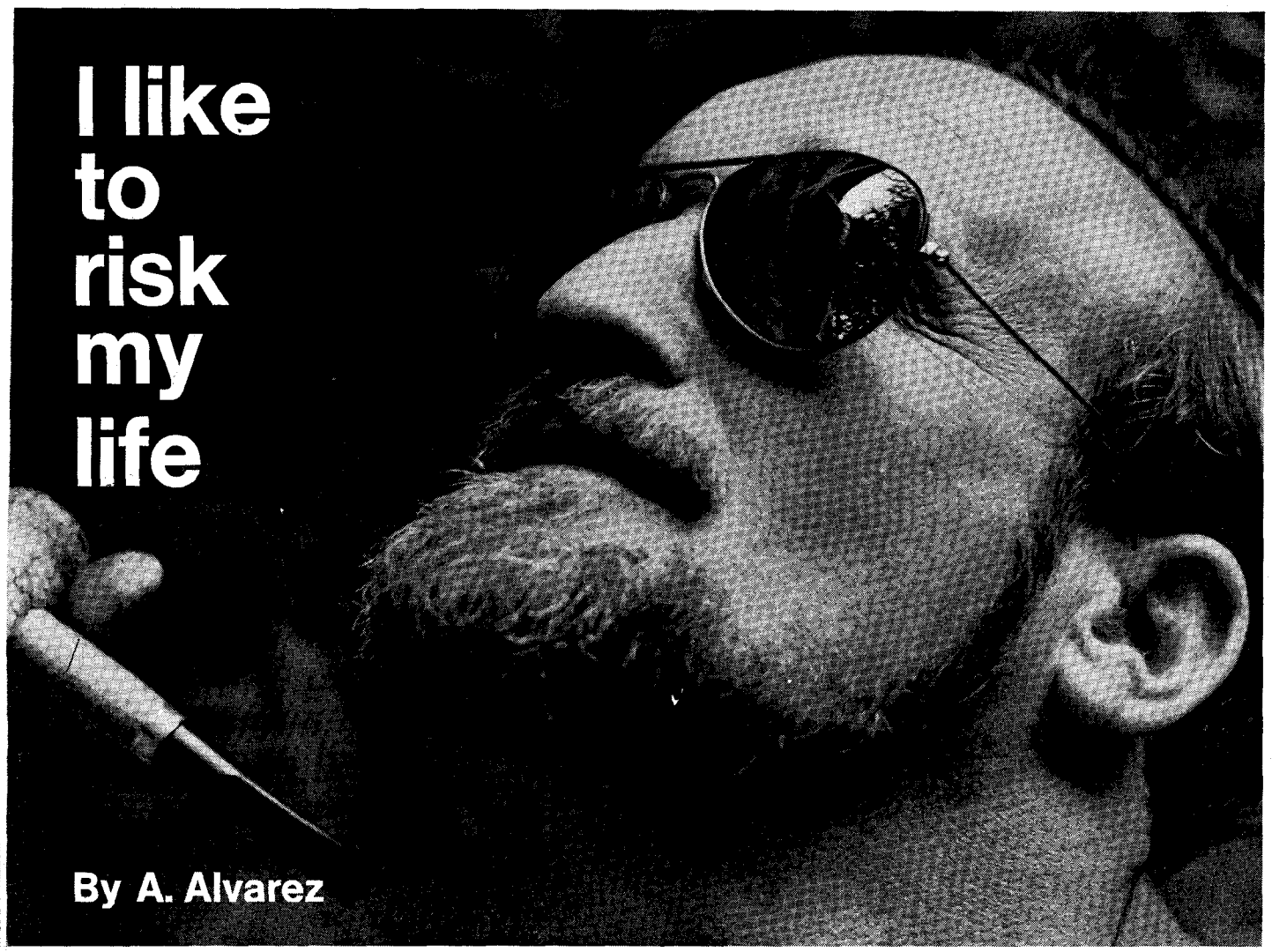
I like to risk my life



By A. Alvarez

While not scaling mountains or racing cars, the author has taught at Oxford, Princeton, and Brandeis and the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has written several books about poetry and won prizes for his own poetry. This picture was taken on a climbing expedition in England.

When George Leigh-Mallory, the British schoolmaster who vanished near the peak of Mount Everest in 1924, was asked why in the world he wanted to climb the mountain, he replied, "Because it is there." No doubt the questioner was part belligerent, part offended, as though climbing were a personal affront to him, and so Leigh-Mallory took appropriate evasive action. I myself find counteraggression the best defense, and reply, when asked why I climb, "Because you're here." But an American mountaineer, faced with the same question, would be well advised to plead the Fifth Amendment. So should the American racing drivers, cave explorers, sky divers and skin divers, and all other devotees of lonely, dangerous sports. For there seems to be a firm belief in the United States that anyone who takes a deliberate risk for any reason except financial gain is indulging in an activity that is basically un-American.

Anyone who feels that way should go any Sunday to the Shawangunks, a long, low cliff just north of New York City. Every weekend the rocks are black with climbers, sweating, heaving, and straining, just as climbers regularly struggle with outcrops outside Paris and London and Munich. These are the risk addicts, getting their weekly fix. So far as the average American citizen is concerned, they seem somehow subversive. At a dinner party one recent evening in New York, for example, I mentioned that I had spent the day climbing on that Shawangunk cliff. My hostess turned her stunning dark eyes on me. "What," she asked, "do you want to go and do a thing like that for?" She made me feel that I had just confessed to insanity.

Yet I suspect that if I had said that I played poker for a living, she would have been pleased. It is one of the oddities of modern America that you can gamble your future on stocks or in Las Vegas and gain nothing but approval. This would show that you are after more security, more goodies. But to take risks for their own sake is felt to be an attack on the social order.

Maybe it is, yet in my experience only Americans take it as a personal threat. A European may secretly think that mountaineers are out of their minds, but he will allow them a certain ambiguous respect. John Hunt got a knighthood out of leading the first expedition to climb Everest; Edmund Hillary, the New Zealander who was the first man to reach the actual peak, also was knighted; Italy's Walter Bonatti, England's Joe Brown, and the late Lionel Terray of France are all minor national heroes for their mountain-climbing skills. And there are advantages even for average performers like myself: In those Italian climbing huts, with action pictures of dead climbers on every wall, the caretaker allows you special rates, his daughter will wash your socks if you ask nicely, and after a big route the nonclimbing tourists buy you drinks and pump you for details.

It is different in the States. Last year I went out to Yosemite Valley, because the word is out that the greatest climbing area in the world is available there, on vast blank walls that rise thousands of feet. At Yosemite a handful of California mountaineers have revolutionized the techniques of climbing. I had always regarded a piton as a mere slug of metal that was hammered into a crack. At Yosemite a piton is an elegant chrome molybdenum instrument to be used with finesse, like a sculptor's chisel. The Yosemite climbers have made the valley into a way of life: They live there for months on a dollar a day, and have trained themselves to spend incredibly long periods—sometimes nine days on end—nailed to what one of them called "the enormous vertical desert" of the cliff faces, hauling their water after them and sleeping in nylon hammocks suspended from pitons over empty space.

In Europe their reputation is awesome; on their home ground they are treated like psychopaths. Admittedly, they are badly dressed and shockingly poor; but they are also devoted, retiring, and not in the least delinquent. For all the good it does them, they might as well be Hell's Angels. While I was there, three friends of mine spent five days climbing the great Nose of El Capitan, over 3,000 feet of sheer and overhanging rock. On the last day I was watching them from the road at the foot of the cliff, among a cluster of tourists in Bermuda shorts. A car drew up and someone got out and joined the onlookers. It was hard to pick out the tiny specks, far up on the dazzling cliff.

"It ain't right," he said. A murmur of approval went through the crowd.

"We ought to run those guys out of the valley," said a park ranger, reassuringly. "They're snarling up the traffic."

Such a promise to protect the American public from the spectacle of risk could be a healthy sign. Hero worship and its cult of bravery can be a nasty, contagious disease, as Nazi Germany showed. But few people climb mountains, race cars or sky-dive simply to cut a figure. Would-be heroes are either incompetent or dead. On a hard route, if you pause to think, "How grand and operatic I must look, plastered on this unforgiving precipice," you will probably fall off. Instead, you are so utterly absorbed in tiny, localized details—problems of technique, balance, power, stamina, equipment—that you scarcely have time to look at the view. It is like playing chess with your body, a series of physical strategies which demand not courage but sheer concentration. The British racing driver Stirling Moss summed this up very well when he said, "It doesn't frighten me to go over the blind brow of a hill at one hundred and sixty or seventy miles an hour. I know I shall make it. I say to myself, if I say anything, that I know how to do this. . . . What's the point of living if one's not able to do *one* thing?"

So what looks like absurd risk to the outsider is usually something quite different to the expert: It is justifiable, controlled. Yet the American public just does not seem to want to know the truth. Consider, for example, the curiously toned-down, "safe" image given the astronauts. They are, on any count, the bravest men since the first aborigine launched his coracle. You would never know it from official sources. The hero of space flight is not Shepard or Grissom or Glenn, in this official version; it is NASA, with all its marvelous technology. It is, in short, good old American know-how writ large and modern. The NASA public-relations campaign is devoted to proving that these men who actually orbit the planet are merely mature and adjusted, with wives and children and investments, just like you and me. A p.r. campaign like the one to which the astronauts are subjected acts as a kind of tranquilizer, and tranquilizers can be habit forming, and most Americans are hooked to an unprecedented degree. To a foreigner like myself, who has carried on a commuter's love affair with the States for years, it seems that Americans use their glimmering vision of the American Way of Life in order to sedate themselves and to forget the violent realities.

Consider the simple fact: The average

One measure of a democracy's strength is the freedom of its citizens to speak out—to dissent from the popular view. Although the editors often disagree with the opinions expressed in Speaking Out, they dedicate the series to that freedom.

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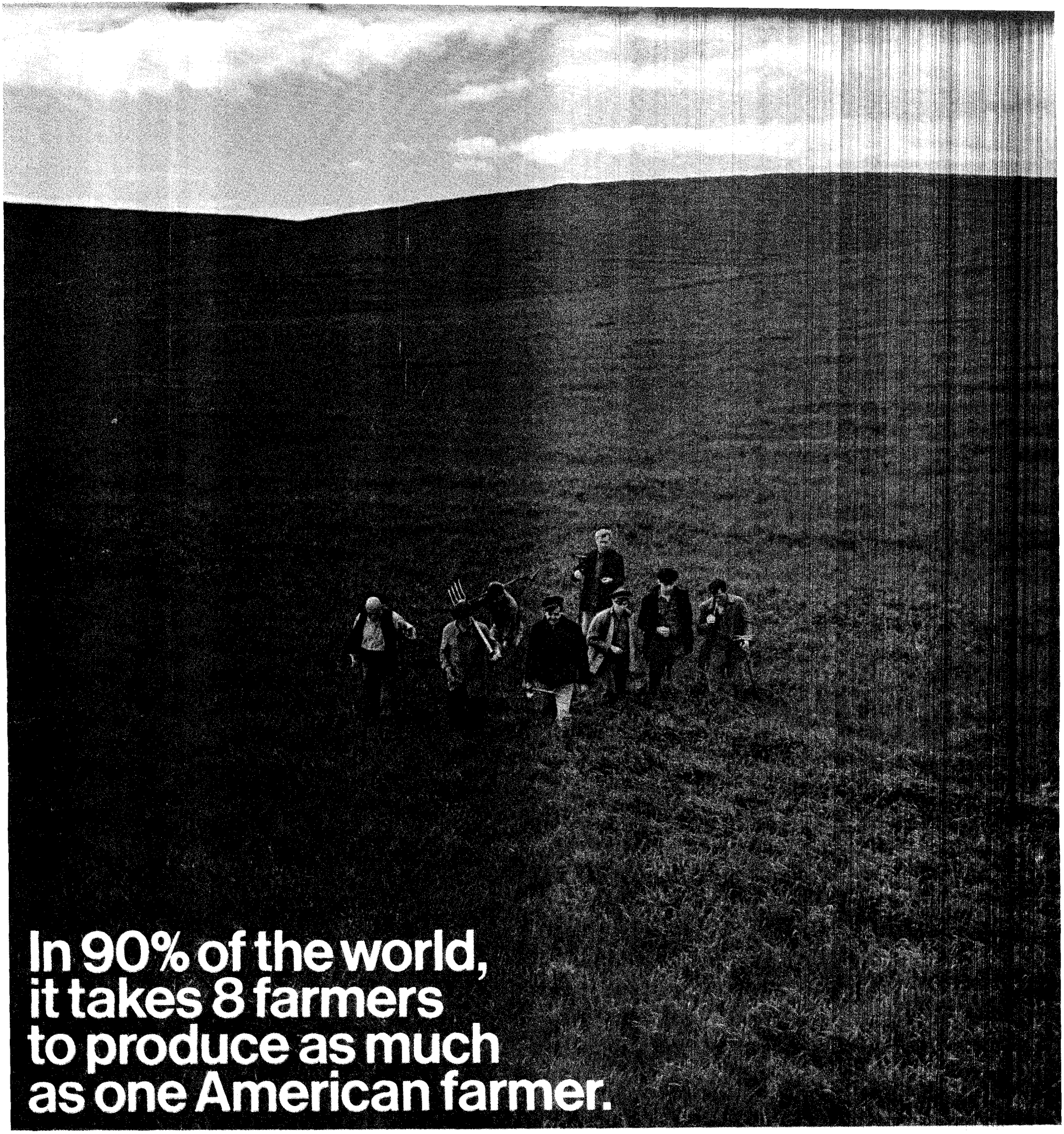

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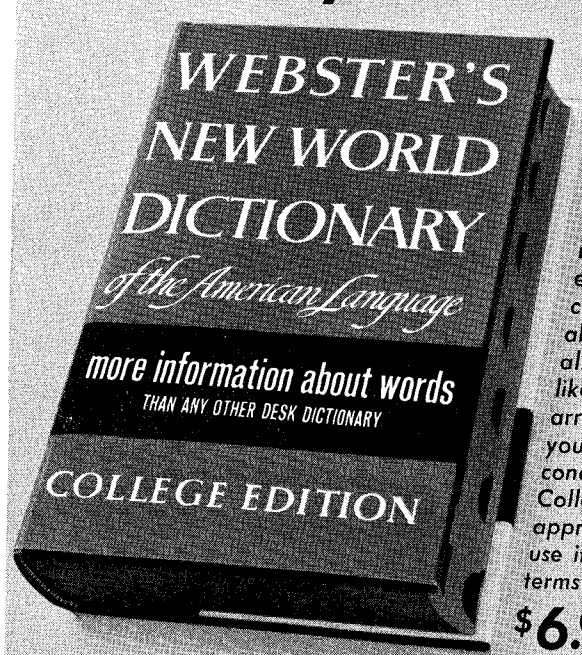

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SPEAKING OUT

American city dweller lives daily with more risk and violence than most mountaineers meet in a lifetime. I would rather commit myself 10 times over to El Capitan than go alone into Harlem or Watts or try to cross Central Park after dark; on a mountain at least you have *some* control over disaster. Even apart from the race riots and muggings, there is violence in the very tone of American life. Think of the casual, almost tender brutality that most New Yorkers take airily for granted. When I first arrived in the States in 1953—innocent, aghast, and 24—I had not been in the country more than an hour before I had been assaulted verbally by a customs officer, a taxi driver, a cop. And when I went into the subway at rush hour I emerged, like some minor paranoid in a Dostoevski novel, feeling that I had been assaulted by the whole world. The average New Yorker, used to it all, simply does not notice any more. Meanwhile, woe betide anyone who denies the illusion by facing up to risks on purpose.

"Those guys up there," announced one of the Bermuda shorters that day in Yosemite, "they're sick, real sick." I suppose this is the standard response. In a society where violence is as normal as the common cold is in England, everyone must automatically protect himself from exposure. To believe in security is the American equivalent of the Englishman's umbrella: an elementary protective mechanism which only a madman would ignore. Thus anybody who voluntarily takes a risk is, wherever it can be arranged, urged to undergo psychiatric treatment.

No doubt a massive, statistical society like the U.S. would simply not work without a great deal of placid adjustment. Hence all those socially acceptable outlets for aggression, ranging from movies and spectator sports to more complex exercises like hating the Communists or the Birchers or your mother-in-law. But too much enforced placidity, like all other evasions of reality, takes a psychic toll. After a certain point security provokes uneasiness. As Freud said, "Life loses in interest when the highest stake in the game, life itself, may not be risked."

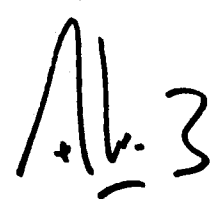
The corollary, that risk somehow enhances life, can mean many things, most of them, alas, untrue. It is, for instance, not true that only the threat of death makes you realize how sweet life is. It is still less true that only when your hair is on end with fear are you really alive. Anyone who needs so violent a stimulus to break through his torpor is already half-dead, just as the people who talk most fervently about the beautiful emotions induced by drugs are those who have the most difficulty in feeling anything at all. But it is true, I think, that intentional, planned risk demands all the qualities most valuable in life: intelligence, skill, intuition, subtlety, control. These are precisely the qualities the good artist brings to his work, and they are also those called upon in the lonely, risky sports. On a cliff you must be intelligent, skillful, intuitive, subtle and controlled with your body. And the greater the risk you choose to take, the greater the reserves you must tap.

I found this out for myself the hard way in August, 1964. A companion and I spent 12 hours perched on a tiny ledge rather too small for both of us, 1,500 feet up an overhanging rock wall in the Italian Dolomites. A storm had caught us; we had no food and no extra clothes; and we had to sit it out while the stars glinted with cold and our outer clothing froze on us. The huge, folded landscape below us was blue and deep. Both of us were convinced we would freeze to death, though neither of us mentioned the fact for fear of demoralizing the other. Since sleep lowers the body's temperature, it was important to stay awake; so we talked in a desultory way, swapped stories, recited limericks; we even tried singing. Occasionally we would slap each other about the back and chest—but tentatively, because of our precarious stance. Our minds, like our bodies, were in suspension, neither frightened nor grieving, just blank.

The following morning we still had 500 feet of vertical and, by then, ice-clad rock to climb. Difficult in the best conditions, it demanded then a concentration and effort that wrung us dry. As a poet once wrote of an artillery barrage, "It seemed disproportionate to the fragility of us." When we finally got back to the hut, swaying with exhaustion, ravenous, battered, we had reached the absolute end of our tether. But that in itself was something. After all, to know how much you can take is a form of self-knowledge. More important still were the other resources we had had to call on—the obscure doggedness that prevented us from simply giving up. At no point did we feel we were fighting the mountain; the battle was only with ourselves.

And that, finally, is what all the risky games are about. They are like a sharp close-up of your life, in which all the essentials are concentrated and defined. You deliberately set up a situation in which, in order to survive, you must respond as fully as you know how. The situation itself may be utterly artificial—on a mountain there is nearly always an easier way to the top—but the element of risk makes it terribly serious. The fascination, for me, is keeping the risk in complete control. Flirting with danger for kicks bores me; it is a form of exhibitionism, a vulgarity to one's self. I would no more climb or drive fast cars in order to hurt myself than I would play poker to lose. The pleasure is in doing something difficult, something that extends your concentration and effort and resourcefulness, without ever losing control.

Within the edgy terms they set up, the risky sports provide an area in which you must take complete responsibility for your own life; that is, they provide precisely the occasions for choice and responsibility that never quite arrive in clear, recognizable form in the routine world. However trivial the context—who, finally, cares about a piece of rock, or a big wave, or a racing record that will be broken next year?—the element of risk can turn a weekend hobby into a small-scale model for living, a life within a life. Perhaps what Leigh-Mallory really meant about his lonely sport was: "I take risks because, for better or for worse, I'm here."



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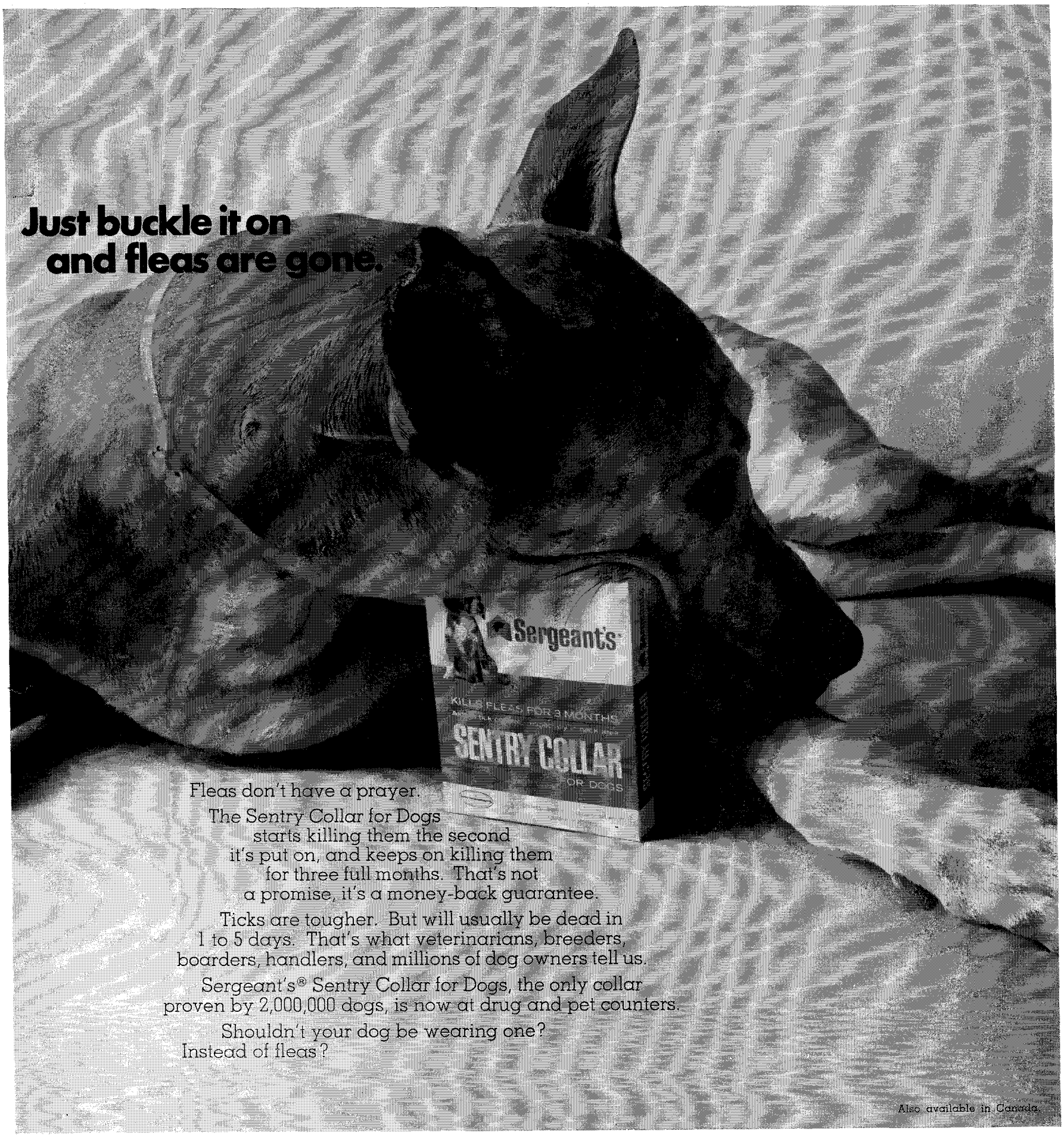

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■ Affairs of State, by Stewart Alsop

'MR. GENOCIDE'

NEW YORK:

I recently spent a good many fascinating, harrowing hours in this city, talking with leaders of the Black Power movement and trying to understand how they felt and what they wanted. The moment I remember best was the moment when Floyd McKissick, director of CORE, got angry at something I had said, and called me "Mr. Genocide."

To understand why I said what I said, and why McKissick got angry, it is necessary to get some idea of the way Negro militants talk. Here, for example, is Floyd McKissick, when asked whether he really believes, as he said at the Newark Black Power conference, that white Americans may "commit genocide against 22 million black people": "Hell, yes, I believe it. Look what you whites did to the Indians."

Here is Daniel Watts, the handsome and engaging editor of *Liberator*, organ of the Negro militant-intellectuals, when asked whether he agreed with McKissick: "Sure I do. You've got to face it objectively—the Negro is obsolete. The American economy no longer needs millions of unskilled workers, so American efficiency has already figured out how to dispose of us in the gas ovens."

Here is Robert Gore, a kindly-mannered, likable Negro intellectual with a full beard: "There's nothing personal in my dislike of you—as a white man, you're just my natural enemy, that's all."

Here are some other direct quotes, scribbled down in my notebook, from these and other Black Power advocates:

"Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young—hell, they're just Lyndon Johnson's house niggers."

"Either we're gonna get our share, or we're gonna burn America down."

"Harlem hasn't really been heard from yet—it's a simple matter to burn down Harlem."

"Our real tormentors, they're the white liberals."

"You know, we've lost respect for Big Charley. When we were kids we believed Whitey was rich and smart, and now we put a real hurt on him, and Whitey's in a panic—the whole W.P.S. is beginning to fall apart." (W.P.S. is shorthand for White Power Structure.)

"I went to a black party, and there was a white butler at the door, bowing and scraping—brother, that's Black Power."

"Whitey's gonna come into Newark and Detroit and the rest and try to bribe us by building a lot more public housing, and we'll burn it right down again. Where do you think those cats in the streets in Newark came out of? Right out of the public housing."

"Maybe burning down cities is a bad way to get our share, but you wouldn't listen to us. You wouldn't even *see* us. Before Watts, we were the invisible man."

"When we get our free state in Southern California, we'll let you honkies in with a passport, but you can't live there. Nothing discriminatory—you'll just be happier among your own kind." (Editor Daniel Watts speaking, with a broad grin.)

"Integration? Integration's a bad joke. We don't want integration, we want separation."

"We don't want the white man's wife or girl friend—our soul sisters have got plenty of soul to take care of us. We don't want *anything* to do with the white man—we just want our slice of the pie."

Here, finally, is Floyd McKissick on the meaning of Black Power: "Take Harlem—Harlem's owned by whites and run by whites. We'll have Black Power when every cop in Harlem is black, every building and every business is owned by blacks, the schools are black, there's an all-black university, and the whole city of Harlem is run by blacks."

This is the way the militants talk. What does it mean?

Perhaps it means a bit less than the words, taken at face value, seem to mean. I don't think that Floyd McKissick and Daniel Watts, for example, *really* expect the white majority in this country to try to exterminate the Negro minority. But the way the Negro leaders of the new generation talk is meaningful all the same.

In the very long run, the meaning may turn out to be healthy. In their passionate emphasis on their own identity as Negroes (or "blacks"—a militant never calls himself a Negro), there is an overweening pride that may evolve into self-respect. The determination of these people to live their own lives, control their own destinies and take pride in their race is surely healthy. And Floyd McKissick is surely right when he contends that the people who live in Harlem ought to run Harlem.

But there is also, in the way these people talk, an irrationality, a divorce from the hard realities, which is deeply unhealthy—and deadly dangerous. In their dreamworld, a "black revolution" is shaking the "W.P.S." to its roots. In reality, the "revolution" has consisted of a series of riots in which Negro neighborhoods have been destroyed and the shaky Negro economy badly damaged, leaving white neighborhoods and the white economy intact. If this is a revolution, it is history's most self-defeating revolution.

Moreover, the Black Power militants are really preaching a Negro version of South Africa's apartheid. It is almost impossible to get these people to talk seriously about such matters as Negro education or housing or welfare—they seem to think that all will be well if the "honkies" are somehow eliminated from their lives. Plenty of white racists will be all too eager to take them at their word and try to seal them off in big-city enclaves or reservations.

Finally, these people are themselves as racist as any Kluxer. To them, as mild-mannered Bob Gore remarked to me, the white man (or "honky," "mother," "peckerwood," "Charley," "Chuck," "redneck," "skins," "Whitey," etc.) is *the* enemy. To all too many white men, and more than ever since the riots, the Negro is *the* enemy. In this blind racism, spreading malignantly, lies the seed of racial war. When I put this to Floyd McKissick, at about one o'clock in the morning in Frank's Restaurant in Harlem, he cheerfully agreed that a race war was possible, and perhaps probable.

"But we whites have ninety percent of the people," I said, "and about ninety-eight percent of the power. If it comes to a race war between us, who do you think will win it?"

McKissick is a genial man, with a broad, infectious grin. But when I put this question to him, his face suddenly contorted in anger, and he jumped to his feet and stalked out. Pete Young, a mutual friend who had introduced us, followed him out, to mollify him.

"I can't take any more of that stuff from that honky," McKissick told Young. "That mother is Mr. Genocide himself."

I can see why my question made Floyd McKissick angry. But it still seems to me a question worth pondering. The white leadership in this country has a deep responsibility to control, if necessary by force, the growing minority of whites who are beginning to talk and think like Kluxers, and who one day may begin to act like Kluxers. But the Negro leadership has some responsibility too.

Stewart Alsop

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Even long ago is not so far away

Long ago.
Was it a morning in September when
you started off to college?
Perhaps a day in June when you
set out to make your fortune?
Or that day of days, your wedding, when you
left home to raise a family of your own?
Long ago you went down the street and left
a part of your life behind you.
Today that house and neighborhood
where you once lived seem far away in years
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By Calvin Tomkins

THE LOVE WAVE

Now that the crisis has passed, social theorists of every stripe are rushing into print with dubious interpretations of the love wave. The true story of the strange and alarming events that shook the world during the closing months of 1967 is in danger of being obscured, so just for the record I should like to set down exactly what *did* happen.

Virtually everyone agrees that the chain of events began on May 30, with the arrest of the so-called "hippies" in Tompkins Square Park, on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The New York hippies had been experimenting with the socio-political technique of mass love (or "flower power," as they archly referred to it). When 38 of them were arrested in the park on charges of four-leaf-clover-plucking and mantra-chanting without a license, they decided to retaliate by means of this new and largely untested weapon. "The fuzz is misguided but not malicious," said a hippie leader. "Let's love them and accept their basic humanity."

The next morning a platoon of hippies with paint cans and brushes invaded local precinct headquarters and started to give the dingy premises a fresh coat of Banana-Skin Yellow. Sharply repulsed, they tried another infiltration a few hours later, this time begging permission to wash the squad cars in the garage. Again they were driven off, but retreated in good order, the hippie girls blowing kisses and shouting endearments to the shaken defenders. A creeping uncertainty infected the precinct from that moment on. Many unprovoked acts of affection during the weeks that followed—a patrolman would be suddenly garlanded with flowers, or pinioned from behind while hippies shined his shoes—tended to sap police morale. At the same time, conciliatory statements by Mayor Lindsay indicated that flower power had thrust its tendrils into City Hall. No one was surprised when charges against the hippies were dismissed at the formal hearing, whereupon the defendants opened a paper sack and showered Hindu temple bells, plastic leis, toy watches and three billion dollars in play money upon spectators, lawyers for both sides and the horrified sergeant-at-arms.

What had not been foreseen was that other, more sinister, elements in society would draw their own conclusions from these events. A sign of wider repercussions came early in September, when Sam (Sam Sparrow) Sparafucile, king of the Brooklyn artichoke mob, sent out engraved invitations to a testimonial "Spaghetti-In" for New York Police Commissioner Howard R. Leary. Commissioner Leary and the other invited city officials sent their regrets. But several reporters attended, and the proceedings, which included eloquent speeches in praise of New York's Finest and many flowery toasts to the Force, made significant reading in the papers next day.

Within a week, outbreaks of police-love occurred in Miami, St. Louis, Chicago, Phoenix and Los Angeles. Homicide bureaus in all five cities were inundated by avalanches of red roses, thrown from speeding black limousines. In the toughest wards of Chicago, patrolmen on night duty were followed by roving choirs of known numbers racketeers, who improvised madrigals in each patrolman's honor with an enthusiasm that compensated for the faulty harmonies. The similarity of love tactics in different locales suggested a concerted underworld strategy, and the Central Park "Cop-In" on October 17 ended all doubts on this score. Some 7,500 criminals from every state gathered in the Sheep Meadow for a day of picnicking, round-dancing, sitar-strumming and forehead-painting ("Cop In, Not Out" was a favorite slogan). A vast column headed by Vittore (Vic the Ax) Scarpia and Al (Thumbscrews) Capuchino, chiefs of the reigning Mafia families in New York, then proceeded to march down Fifth Avenue, sweeping up and carrying on their shoulders every policeman assigned to guard them, chanting the *Hare Krishna* and tying up traffic for 19 blocks. While the traffic jam soon straightened itself out, the police felt their authority had been seriously undermined. "Our procedure in this type of case is to keep the ringleaders under surveillance and make sure it doesn't happen again," a police official told reporters. "The trouble is," he added, "we're not quite sure what happened."

As the FBI prepared to deal with what was now recognized as a national emergency, the love wave took on international overtones. Radio Havana carried Fidel Castro's 15-hour address to the Cuban Missile Society, a speech he devoted to exhortations of affection for "our beloved Yanqui imperialist dogs." Ten thousand early season valentines were delivered to the Guantánamo naval base, and marines on picket were importuned by legions of sighing *señoritas*. Egypt and Syria joined the offensive. "Strengthen our abiding love for the infidel Americans, O Allah," cried the muezzins from their minarets. "Death to the America-hating Israelis!" In the Arab refugee camps in Jordan, wailing women trampled one another in their frenzy to kiss Ted Williams's signed endorsement on U.S.-supplied, red-white-and-blue-striped tents. All Araby, Nasser claimed, was united by a flame of unquenchable ardor for "*Aam Sam*"—Uncle Sam.

With country after country leaving the uncommitted ranks to register its devotion to the United States, the State Department succumbed to panic. Cast adrift in a universal sea of adoration, without an enemy left to cling to, Washington recalled its envoys for frantic consultations. Insulting memoranda were fired off to foreign heads of state. The CIA attempted to organize stonings of American embassies in Damascus and Rangoon—only to see them transformed into the familiar and dreaded flower peltings. Mounting anxiety over the effects of the love war on the U.S. military posture was intensified by a Cabinet meeting at which the openly weeping Joint Chiefs of Staff resigned en masse. Conflicting rumors had the military chiefs retreating to a Buddhist monastery in Kentucky and accepting consultant positions with the National Rifle Association, which warned its members of a "world plot to disarm America."

Behind the scenes at the United Nations, U.S. diplomats were working night and day to block a Soviet resolution establishing a permanent International Brotherly Love Force in Philadelphia, with contingents from all Soviet-bloc nations. Following a U.S. veto in the Security Council, the resolution went to the General Assembly, where it appeared to be assured of passage. The Russians had lined up an impressive majority and, spurred by reports that Mao Tse-tung was about to unleash a 17-line poem on the beauties of the Pedernales River, and a 9,000-page pamphlet accusing Kosygin of hypocritical, revisionist and unscientific "puppet love" for America, they were pressing for a vote.

At this critical juncture, French President Charles de Gaulle announced his intention to address the Assembly. Secrecy shrouded his motives, which added to the drama of his arrival by parachute in United Nations Plaza, after authorities at Kennedy International Airport refused landing clearance and directed his Caravelle to a secondary airfield in Tucson. Thirty minutes later, wearing an ermine-trimmed, floor-length, red robe and holding the Cross of Lorraine, de Gaulle faced the hushed delegates. America, he said, did not really exist ("*C'est un pays sans existence sérieuse*"). Wicked people had fabricated the image of flower power ("*puissance des fleurs*") to dissemble the true, eternal grandeur of France. To speak of love for America, therefore, was not only absurd but anti-French ("*contre moi.*").

His words had an electrifying effect. Representatives of the newer African nations were overcome with grief and several Arab delegates were seen to waver in their burnouses. Sensing deliverance, U.S. Ambassador Goldberg moved for an immediate vote on the Soviet resolution, which was then defeated. The delegates of Tanzania, Upper Volta and Nepal rose to condemn U.S. dissemblance in ringing terms, and amid comforting mutual recriminations the Assembly adjourned.

Although Soviet and Red Chinese leaders continued for several weeks to accuse one another of sabotaging the Love International, the crisis had been averted. At the present writing, the FBI appears to have broken the back of the domestic love wave, and only the Tompkins Square hippies still profess affection for the police. □

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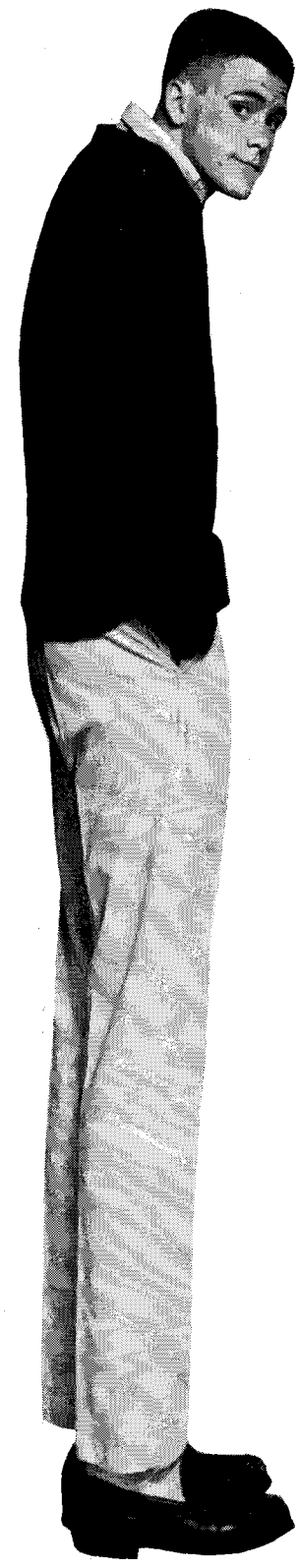

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Points West

By John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion

Shipping Out

It squats out there across the fence from the railroad tracks, Building 590, and it is the most depressing place I have ever seen. It was a warehouse originally, and at first glance it seems roughly the size of Rhode Island, a vast and cheerless leper colony cut off from the rest of the Oakland Army Base by an invisible line of demarcation. When I was a boy, I seemed to spend an inordinate amount of time at Irish Catholic wakes, and, except for the absence of keening women, it was that same funereal quality that came back to me when I drove up to Building 590 that afternoon. For it is here that the enlisted soldiers of the U.S. Army spend their last 24 hours in the States before shipping out to Vietnam.

Twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, the troops are processed out of Oakland—600, 800, 1,000 men a day. "It's like a production line," the post commandant explained to me. "It's got to be. Otherwise we'd never get rid of them." The men report in. Their shot records, ID cards and dog tags are checked. They hand in their green dress uniforms ("Not much use for them over there," a supply sergeant says) and are issued a poncho, jungle boots and combat fatigues. Everything that meets the eye seems to have an ominous double meaning. YOUR LAST CHANCE, says the sign over the telephone booth. The judge advocate does a brisk business in wills, the chaplain in baptisms. In the nondenominational Meditation Room, I see a young private sitting motionless in a plastic-covered chair, his head in his hands. "We get 'congressionals' up to here," the post commandant says. "Momma writes her congressman and says Junior can't go overseas. Then the congressman writes us." He shakes his head and smiles at me.

I sit with the transient company commander in his office. "We try to keep the men's minds off . . ." His voice trails away. "We have a broad scope of activities—KP, guard duty, janitorial duties." I ask about AWOL's. He says they are dealt with leniently, even men who report in 10 and 15 days late. "A court-martial only holds up the works," he says. "Our job is to get them out of here." The company clerk enters the office. "Henry's back, sir," he says. Henry had gone AWOL three times, each time missing a shipment. "I think he needs a little extra consideration, sir," the clerk says.

"We've given him a lot of extra consideration," the company commander says wearily. He is a reserve officer, a lawyer from Tampa, and it has been a 17-hour day.

"I know, sir. But this time his wife shot herself."

I am assigned to Group 20, leaving at 0450 the next morning. The group leader is a fat master sergeant who has been assigned to take over a PX in Danang. He seems apologetic about his posting. "I'd rather be out with the men," he says. He glances at me covertly. "My son told me to bring home some souvenirs."

Finally I go to Building 590. It sleeps 2,000 men. The building is hot and close and smells of sweat. There are no showers or hot water, and there are not enough blankets, sheets and pillows to go around. The men fold over the bare mattress at the end to make a pillow and sprawl on their bunks. Some put towels over their faces to shield their eyes from the bare light bulbs and try to sleep. Despite the heat, I see a Negro private pulling on a suit of long woolen un-

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derwear. "I feel cold," he says to no one in particular. "I just feel cold." His bunkmate looks embarrassed and pretends not to hear.

The men are restricted to Building 590. They shine their boots and polish their brass, the witless Army pursuits for passing the time. There is little camaraderie. It is the first barracks I have ever been in without seeing a single deck of cards, a single pair of dice. The men are strangers brought together for two days before once again finding the bonhommie of a unit. Resignation and uncertainty are the only common denominators, and they blur the men together into a kind of facelessness. The feeling is heightened through the afternoon and evening by the squawk box, which calls out a series of strangely deracinated names, "Jonsurd . . . Sugdennis . . . Fernander." Many seem anxious to be on their way. "I want to get out with the guys," I hear one boy say.

"But man, they're going to be shooting at you," someone says.

"Yeah, but at least I'll be with people I know."

I take a tour of Building 590. There are television sets, a pool table, Ping Pong. Beside a writing table is a rack of religious literature—*The Serviceman: Patriotism and Morale, Has the New Liturgy Killed Personal Piety?* (The answer: "Truth on both sides.") By the shipping station there is a duffel bag tagged simply, AWOL. Dozens of vending machines disgorge an endless variety of coffee, milk, soft drinks, ice cream, sandwiches, pastry, Nalley's Hot Tamales, Nalley's Hot Enchiladas, Nalley's Chili Con Carne. In the latrine, men have written all over the walls the date of their departure, the date of their return. There is only one attempt at gallows humor: "Jonnie Rae Smith, Vietnam, Leave 5 June 1967—Return?" The lights go off and I make my way back through the aisles. I have seen too many war movies, too many opening scenes in which the camera pans over the platoon as the audience picks out the ones who are not going to make it through the last reel. I cannot help myself as I pass the men lying listlessly in their bunks. "That one," I say to myself, "that one."

I stretch out on a bunk. Around me men doze. A transistor radio picks up an acid rock station in San Francisco, and the strains of *Acapulco Gold* filter softly through the bay. Across the aisle a boy endlessly packs and repacks his duffel bag. His bunkmate has six rolls of toilet paper and he tries to make room for them. He discards his low quarters and a dozen old copies of *Playboy*, from which he methodically cuts the foldout Playmates, wrapping them in a plastic bag and then placing them neatly in his duffel. In the bunk beneath me, three young privates discuss the ethics of sleeping with one's sister-in-law and compare the merits of the women of Roanoke and the women of Wheeling. "Those girls in Wheeling ain't very good-lookers," says one, "but they sure got shapes on them."

Sleep comes, and then at 0430 the great exhaust fan goes on and a sergeant walks through the bay. "Time, gentlemen," he says softly. "It's time." The men of Group 20 pick up their hand baggage and fall in by the door of Building 590. A sleepy Air Force enlisted man tells them that buses will take them to Travis Air Force Base, halfway between Oakland and Sacramento, where a World Airways Boeing 707, Flight No. W239, will fly them, via Anchorage, Alaska, and Yokota Air Base, Japan, to their destination, Bien Hoa, South Vietnam. The total flying time will be 19 hours. There will be in-flight movies and five stewardesses.

I find a seat in the last bus. Dawn is just beginning to pinken the sky. In the seat ahead of me, a Pfc. in the infantry attempts to make conversation with a sergeant in the medics. "Don't pick up any dead bodies, Sergeant," the Pfc. says. "I hear they're booby-trapped."

"I won't be picking any up, son," the sergeant says. "I'll be back in the lab cutting them."

He looks out the window and the Pfc. tries to laugh. "If you see me coming through, handle me gentle, Sergeant."

It is shortly after six when Group 20 arrives at Travis. Thirty minutes later, Flight No. W239 is called. The last man aboard slaps his hand on the ground. At 0708, the 707 is airborne. Afterward, driving to Sacramento, I turn on the 8 A.M. news. An infantry company has been slaughtered in the central highlands. I remember what the post commandant told me about the men who process back through Oakland on their way home from Vietnam. "One thing we do is give them a steak," he said. "We give them a ticket and they can have that steak any time they want it. Morning, noon or night."

John Gregory Dunne

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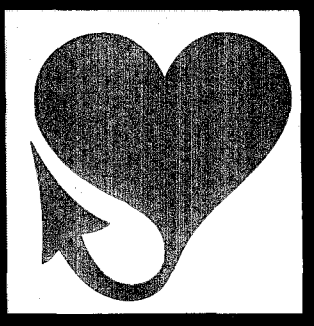
a beat.**



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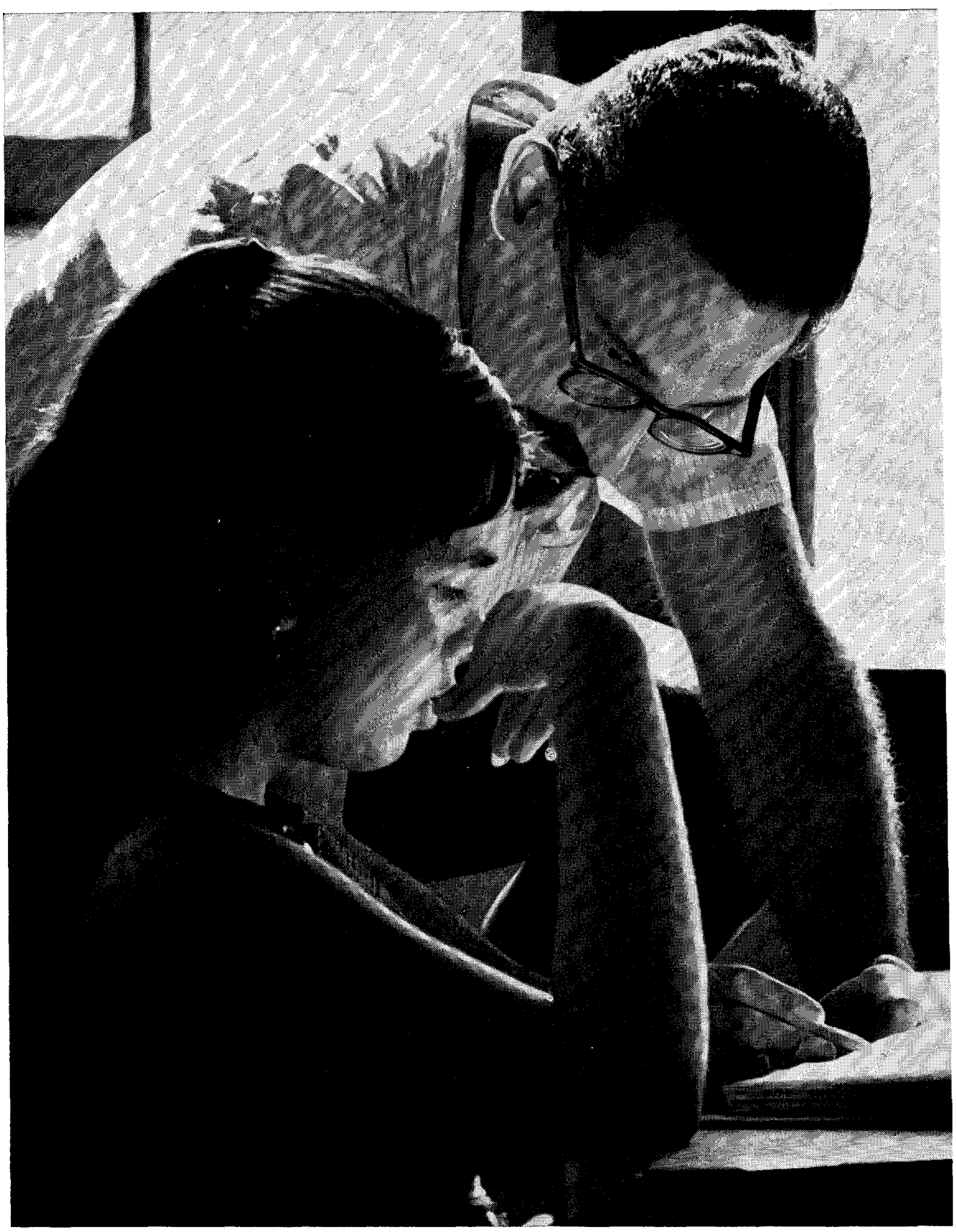
The Saturday Evening POST

In five years as board chairman of a giant metropolitan school district, the author learned a lot about bureaucracy, incompetence and waste. Here is the story of what he tried to do about it—and why he failed.

What's wrong with our big-city schools



By Martin Mayer
Photographs by Harvey Lloyd

For the last five years the opening of school has meant for me a constantly ringing telephone, a round of meetings and a burst of duty visits to P.S.-this-or-that. As a school-board chairman in a district with more than 30,000 children of all races, creeds and colors, I was supposed to know what was happening in my district and somehow to reconcile the professional staffs of its schools and the parents whose kids attended them. Mine was by no means a unique experience—there are at least 23,000 school-board chairmen who enjoy similar rewards of prominence every fall. The experience was unusual in one way, however, because there was almost nothing I could do for the people who called me, and little of substance that could come out of our meetings. That parents kept calling us and coming to the meetings shows how desperately the people who have children in America's big-city schools want someone who will at least listen to their troubles.

All big-city school systems suffer from a kind of deafness that keeps them from hearing what people are saying. When a working mother suggests that it might be a good idea to open a school at 8 rather than 8:30 so women like herself could leave their children in a supervised place before going to work, the answer is that there's no budget for that. When mothers whose children ride a disorderly bus to and from school volunteer to take turns keeping peace on the vehicle, the answer is that the system's insurance policy covers only children supervised by licensed personnel. These are supposed to be real answers, but what they mean, obviously, is that nobody's listening.

Parents don't realize that teachers get the same sort of answers. At one of our meetings a junior-high teacher came forward to complain that she had spent the summer working at a university on the problems of teaching illiterate 13-year-olds to read. Now she had a class of illiterate 13-year-olds, and her principal wouldn't let her give her children the books she had learned to use; he said they weren't on the Board of Education's "approved list" of materials that could be bought for the classrooms. The teacher, who had been conditioned to obeying silly rules, was prepared to accept this answer, but she was puzzled about why the books hadn't been approved. When she checked up, she found that they really were on the approved list, but they were new and her principal had an old list. Then the principal told her all the money was spent, so she still couldn't have the books that he was sure would help her desperate class.

Question: Could such nonsense occur in your school system? *Answer:* If you live in a big city, you bet it could.

Actually, in the case of the teacher and the books, I had enough status to pry the money loose and get the materials into the classroom. It was one of those little triumphs that an honest attempt to listen can bring if you're a board member. But the day comes when you can see you're bailing the

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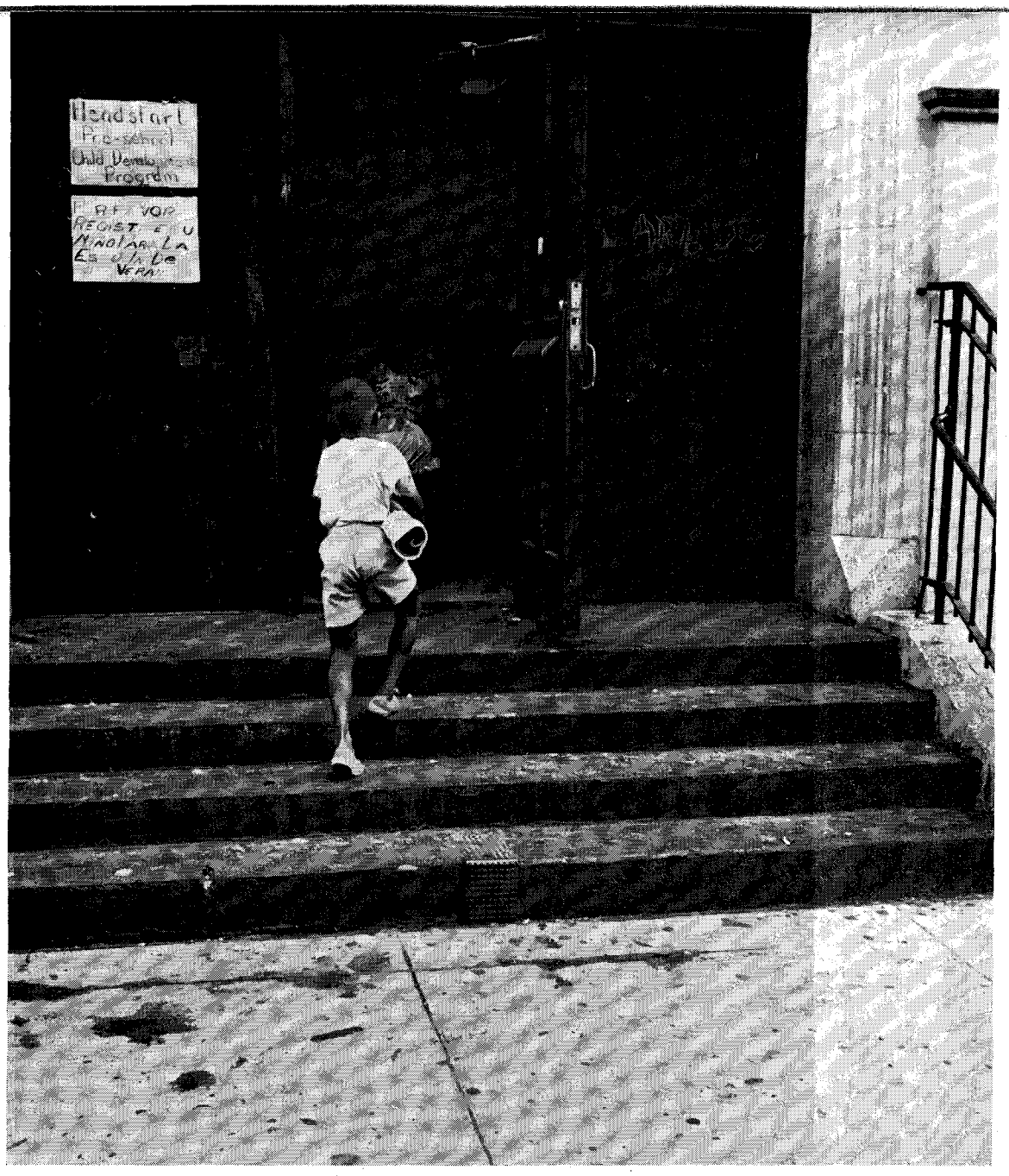

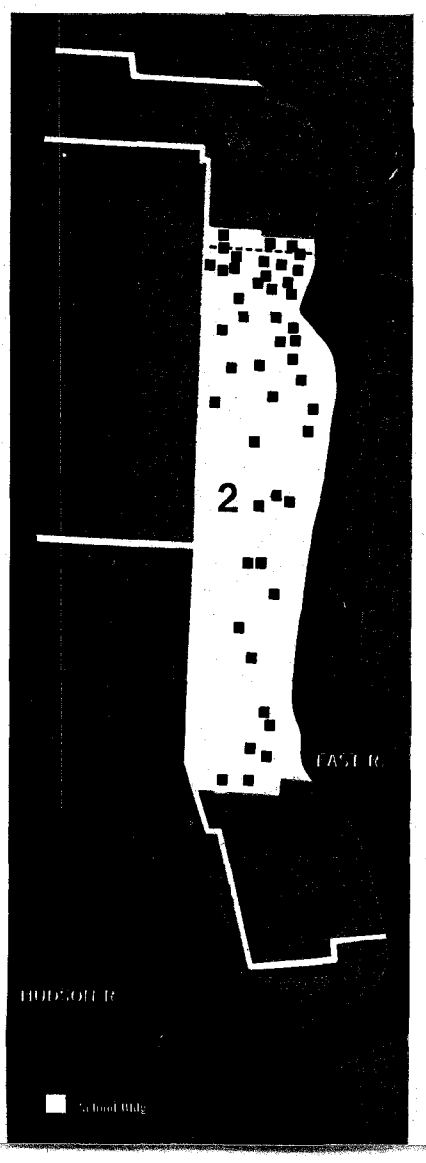

Author's long, narrow district, dotted with schools, ran between the broken lines at north and south until rezoning changed its boundaries to those of section shown in white.

bay with a thimble, and after five years I am done with official listening: on June 30, I resigned. The bay is too big for my thimble.

The New York City school system consists of over 900 schools manned by about 55,000 teachers trying to educate almost 1.1 million pupils—more than in all but 10 of the 50 states. About $1.4 billion, five percent of all the money spent on public-school education in the United States, is spent annually by the New York City Board of Education. This giant empire is almost completely insulated from public control. It is literally true that nobody knows how the money is spent. I once cornered the president of the Board of Education in the Bankers Club, and he said, "Only two people know where the money goes—God and Ferris (John J. Ferris, then director of the schools' budget). And when Ferris dies, God will know a great deal more than He does now."

All authority resides in the Board of Education, whose nine members are appointed for seven-year terms by the mayor, and are just about unremovable except by the state legislature, which exercises ultimate control. The board, in turn, appoints a superintendent, now Bernard Donovan, a round-faced, sharp Irishman whom another Irishman recently defended by saying that he thought it was unfair to pick on a man just because he looks like a bartender. Traditionally, the superintendent does not delegate his decision-making power to anybody: everything can be appealed to the top. Thus, during the last school year, while supervising an operation comparable in the size of its budget and staff to all the television networks combined, Donovan had to decide, for example, whether boys could wear their hair long in a high school, how to use 70 women who never finished high school but have had a year's training to prepare them to be "assistant teachers," and whether or not certain magazines were suitable for school libraries.

In making his decisions, the superintendent depends on a headquarters staff of literally thousands of drudges, most of whom work in a 12-story rabbit warren of an office building in downtown Brooklyn, and on the bylaws and regulations of the system, books of rules that fill a bookcase behind glass in the office of the secretary of the board.

Because nobody really knows what is in the rules, almost any expenditure of money or assignment of personnel or change of curriculum can be blocked by a bland statement that it violates the regulations (or the union contract, or the state education law, itself such a mess that the majority leader of the state senate had to commission a computer center in Pittsburgh to try to make sense out of it before he could begin proposing amendments). What keeps the school system running at all is that nobody at headquarters knows what is going on in the schools, so principals and teachers can get away with a fair amount of rule-breaking if they don't make too much noise about it.

To a degree the system is self-correcting, because every once in a while the combination of tight rules and ignorance at headquarters generates a public scandal. The most important of these in recent years emerged in 1961, after an assistant in the Board of Education's construction division happened to wander into a room where the deputy superintendent in charge of construction was opening sealed bids from contractors. When these bids are ties, the division's policy was to flip a coin. The contract that was being awarded on this day, it turned out, had drawn identical bids, and the assistant noted approvingly that his boss was indeed flipping a coin after opening the bids. But then he saw that *his boss was not looking at the coin after he flipped it!* This was very disturbing, and on the advice of his wife the assistant took his tale to the district attorney—and presently the deputy superintendent in charge of construction had retired (on full pension), and the state legislature was in special session to do something to clean up corruption in the school system.

This is where I come in. The main effect of the bill the state legislature passed was to wipe the slate clean: The entire Board of Education was dismissed by legislative act, and the mayor was told to pick a new one from a list of candidates who would be nominated by a panel of distinguished citizens, including the presidents of the local universities, bar associations, and so forth. But the legislature also took notice of the fact that the school system seemed to have almost no points of contact with the people who live in the city. The legislators had heard about the city's "local school boards"—honorary bodies with no defined duties, whose members were appointed by the city's five borough presidents, appeared at school graduations and the like, and got their names on brass plaques on new buildings. Under the new law these appointments were taken away from the borough presidents, and the new Board of Education was told to "revitalize" the local school boards.

Doing something about the local school boards could not be a first-priority item for the members of the new Board of Education, who took office in the fall of 1961. They had to find a replacement for the former superintendent, John J. Theobald, who resigned after his administration had been rocked by the construction scandal, and after the newspapers had uncovered the fact that a pleasure boat had been made for him at one of the city's voca-

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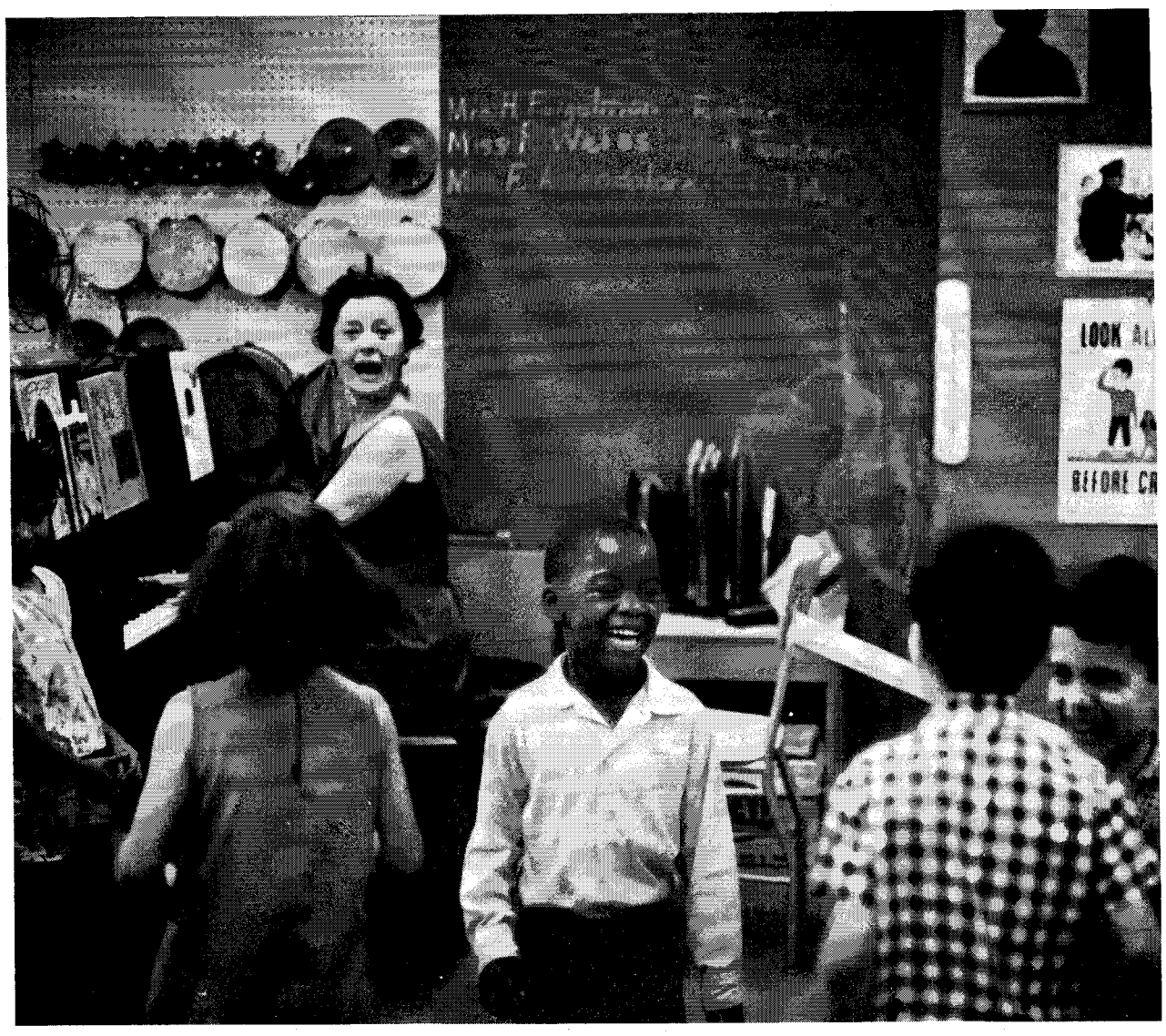
tional high schools (several people in the school system, declaring themselves absolutely unwilling to step into any boat made in a vocational school, thought this incident should be chalked up to Theobald's credit, but the editorial writers thought otherwise). The new board also had to wrest increased appropriations out of the legislature and the mayor. And as civil libertarians, its members felt a need to spend endless hours on the cases of some teachers who had been dismissed for failure to sign non-Communist affidavits (a requirement that the Supreme Court later threw out as unconstitutional anyway).

Because the board was busy with other things, the job of setting up new local school boards was turned over to a young lady named Andrea Wilson, who had never before in her adult life (except as a mother) had anything to do with schools. She quickly discovered that the system was divided administratively into 25 "districts," each with about 40,000 pupils and a "field assistant superintendent," appointed by headquarters. Mrs. Wilson decided that there should be one nine-member local board for each district, and she duplicated on a smaller scale the mayor's system of organizing "screening panels" of civic groups, settlement houses, religious leaders and parents associations to consider nominations for the local boards. Then Mrs. Wilson went out to get people to apply. Having written a book called *The Schools*, in part highly critical of the way the New York schools were run, I was in her mind a natural candidate. It is, I suppose, a reasonable measure of Mrs. Wilson's efficiency that I said, "No," and shortly thereafter found myself a local-school-board member. I was one of a rather large number of unexpected and unusual appointments, and Mrs. Wilson had some trouble getting us approved, though she finally succeeded.

My district ran up Manhattan's East Side from 10th Street to 106th Street (redistricting has since changed these borders slightly). It included the northern four blocks of the old immigrant Lower East Side; the enormous middle-class and upper-middle-class white housing projects Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village north of 14th Street; the elegance of Gramercy Park; the fanciest part of the city's business district; the U.N. area; the most expensive housing in America, on Park Avenue and Fifth Avenue in the 60's, 70's and 80's; the second-generation and first-generation German-Polish-Czech-Hungarian immigrant communities in Yorkville (east of the rich housing in the 60's through the low 90's)—and, north of 96th Street, which is a kind of invisible Chinese Wall, the teeming slum of East Harlem. There is no more varied slice of urban life anywhere in the world.

One of the strengths of the New York schools, even in their present extremity, is that this district, where most people with money send their children to private or parochial schools, could supply from its public-school constituency a board of the quality of ours. Mark McCloskey, the only other man in the group, started life as a tough kid in Hell's Kitchen; he has been a trustee of Vassar College, and today, at 75, he teaches at Manhattan Community College. Among the seven ladies on the board were Mary Fisk, daughter of former Gov. Averell Harriman; Nanette Berman, then associate counsel to the New York Civil Liberties Union and now a family-court judge; and Frances Low, wife of City Councilman Robert Low.

We met together for the first time on October 2, 1962, in the district superintendent's dark and dirty meeting room behind the auditorium in an antique school in the East 30's, and I was elected chairman. This did nothing to ease the worries of our district superintendent, Edward Scalea, a lean, almost military man with a lined face, neatly combed iron-gray hair and mustache to match.



Scalea's bearing, his rather harsh voice, and his schoolteacher's manner of wagging a finger at people gave him a quite misleading appearance of inflexibility. Though he was good at choking it down, however, he had a high sense of humor, and he was determined to make his local board a functioning and significant body. He and his wife (a principal in a Brooklyn school) had worked in the New York system all their lives. They had no children themselves; but they cared about what happened to the children whose education they supervised; and if that meant getting along with the likes of me and Mark McCloskey, it was a price Ed Scalea would pay.

Scalea had prepared for each of us a map of our district, on which were marked the location of every school and the boundary of every school zone. A fact sheet for each school told us the capacity of the building, the date of its construction and the number of children in it; the number of teachers and their special functions, if any (remedial reading, art, physical education, etc.); the relative proportions of Negro, Puerto Rican and "other" children; and the average measured I.Q. It took only the most casual browsing of these documents to see that we had bad troubles.

Our schools were five-eighths Negro and Puerto Rican, though the district's resident population was more than three-quarters "other"—or, in school-system jargon, "mainland white." Of our 18 elementary schools, two were more than 90 percent white—two fifths of all the white children in the district attended these two—and six were more than 90 percent Negro and Puerto Rican. In most of the schools with a majority of Negro and Puerto Rican students, more than half the children in the classrooms in September would move elsewhere before June, either to another address within the district or out of it entirely. In several schools in the slum area, moreover, a third or more of the *teachers* left every year. Nearly all the schools in Negro and Puerto Rican neighborhoods were badly overcrowded, in poor repair, short of books and equipment, staffed primarily by "substitute" teachers (without a regular license), or by very young teachers with three years' experience or less. More than half the sixth-graders in our two upper-middle-class, overwhelmingly white schools were working nearly two years above grade level as measured by standardized tests; more than half the sixth-graders in our slum schools were working nearly two years below grade level.

The worst single disaster was a junior high school at 100th Street and First Avenue, facing the block which *The New York Times* had recently labeled the worst street in the city. The building had been put up 50 years before as an elementary school to house 1,200 children. Conversion to a junior high—with larger auditorium, gyms and library—had reduced its capacity; but there were 1,800 children in the building. And the Negro and Puerto Rican children in this school were about as badly battered by the fates as any in New York. Tests given when they entered and when they graduated showed that only one in 20 of them was up to grade level in reading or in math; half of the seventh grade and probably a third of the ninth grade were for all practical purposes illiterate—a condition which meant, incidentally, that they could not decipher the incredibly complicated schedule cards that told them where to go each period of the day. (*Continued on page 66*)

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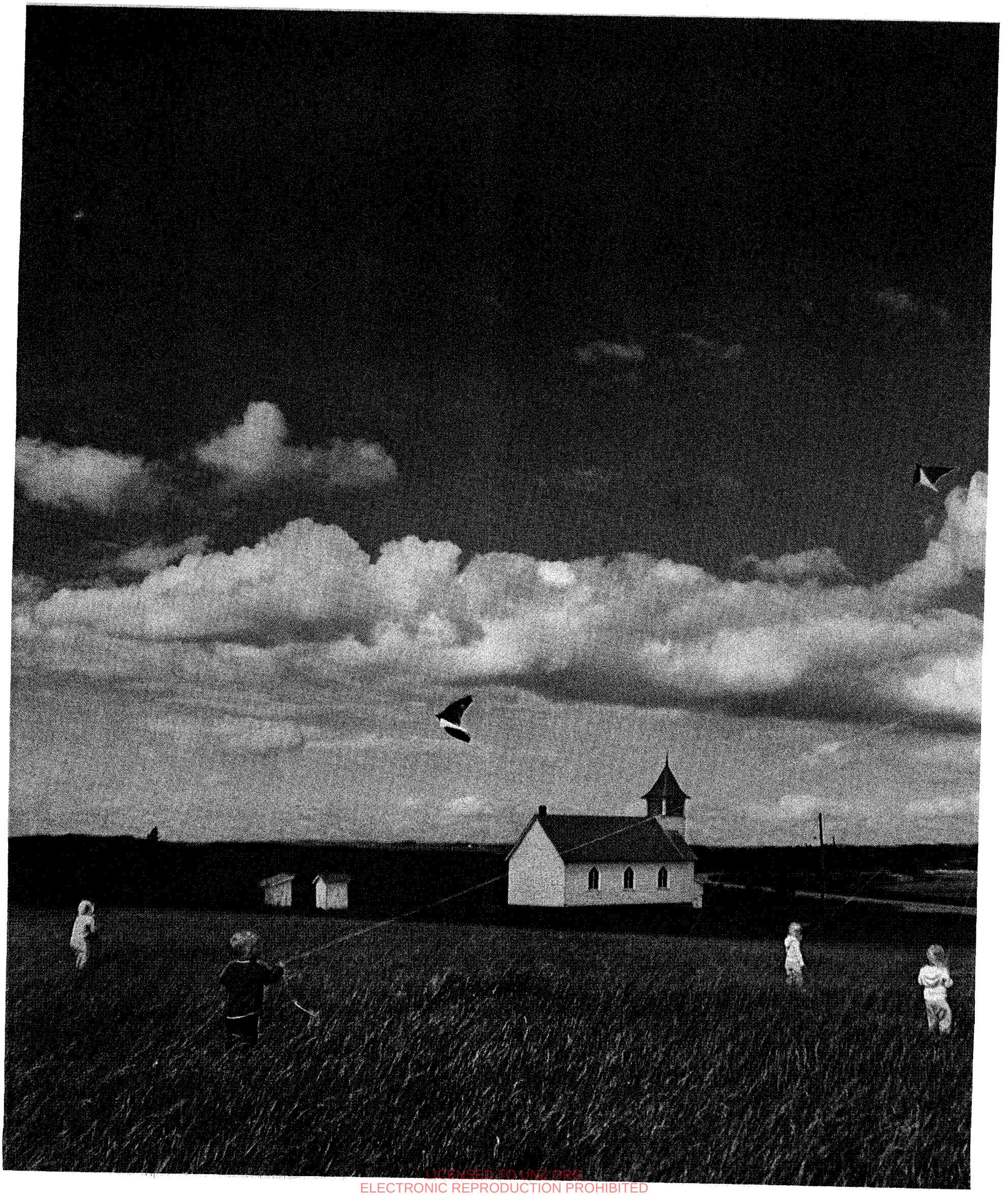

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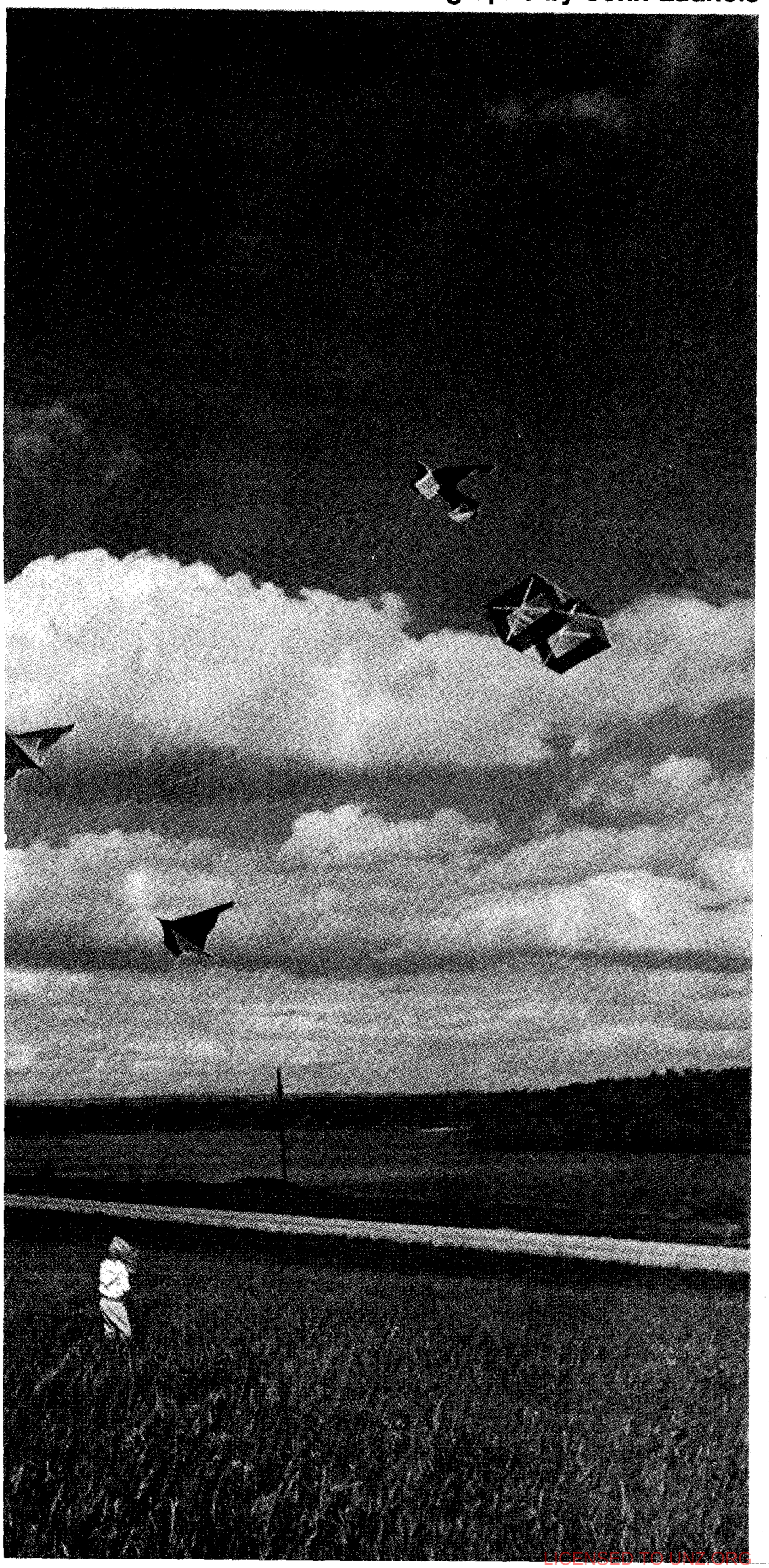
Photographs by John Launois



THE QUINTS ON A PICNIC

For almost four years the Fischer quintuplets have been leading a carefully sheltered life. Here they get a wide-eyed look at the world outside.

By Ann Bayer

Four is an exuberant age, an age for having fun, for going on picnics and flying kites. The handicaps of babyhood are gone, and the four-year-old can frolic freely, tumble on the grass, or poke into the secrets of the world around him. School is still far off, and there are no responsibilities, nothing that has to be learned unless the four-year-old feels like learning it.

The Fischer quintuplets celebrate their fourth birthday on September 14, but they are already enjoying the rambunctious life of four-year-olds. The wobble is gone from their walk. They

A line-up of quints. The look-alikes are, from left, Mary Ann, Cathy, Margie, Maggie and Jimmy. Their first time out, the quints prove to be champion kite fliers.

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Unlike most four-year-olds, the quints have no need for an imaginary playmate.

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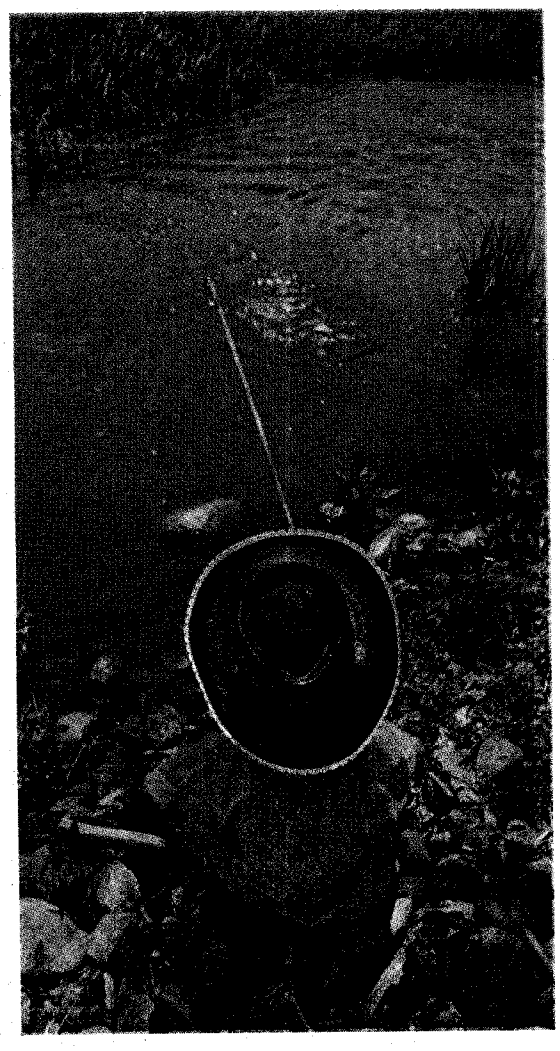
The quints are fast developing individual traits and are going their own separate ways. An unidentified quint tries exploring off by herself (above) while Jimmy—the only male—retreats to a secluded spot where he can try out his new line and tackle. At left, the girls decide to take a ladylike stroll on the Fischer farm.

can count to 10, sometimes skipping the last few digits. They show a desire to please, and when one of them gets a case of the giggles, the others are likely to catch it. In conversation, they tend to resemble the myna, and if an adult says, "You're naughty," the answer may be "No, *you're* naughty." After "no," their second-favorite word is "mine!" which is spoken with authority.

Yet the Fischer quintuplets are not like other four-year-olds, for, as America's only quintuplets, they are unique. They lead a sheltered life on the Fischers' 800-acre farm in Aberdeen, S. Dak., because Andy and Mary Ann Fischer do not want their five celebrated offspring subjected to curious stares. In fact, they have succeeded so well that few townsfolk can brag of actually having seen the quints. They are unusual in other ways, too. Surrounded not only by each other but by the six other Fischer children as well, they have no need for an imaginary playmate—a companion who usually turns up when a child starts crowding four years of age. The children also forgo various playthings that could be dangerous. Certain types of playground equipment, with swings and monkey bars, have been decreed to be too risky to have around six active youngsters. (The sixth is three-year-old Cindy.)

The quintuplets cannot be completely sheltered, however. Recently, when all the older children were home from school for the summer, the Fischers decided to take their first day-long family excursion. The location chosen was the lake district some 90 miles northeast of Aberdeen. Transporting 11 children presents a staggering logistics problem. This is one of the reasons why their mother has hesitated until now to take the "babies"—a collective term she uses for the quints and Cindy—any farther than her parents' farm in Hecla, less than an hour's drive away.

On the morning of the picnic, at eight o'clock sharp, everyone was allocated a place in the sta-



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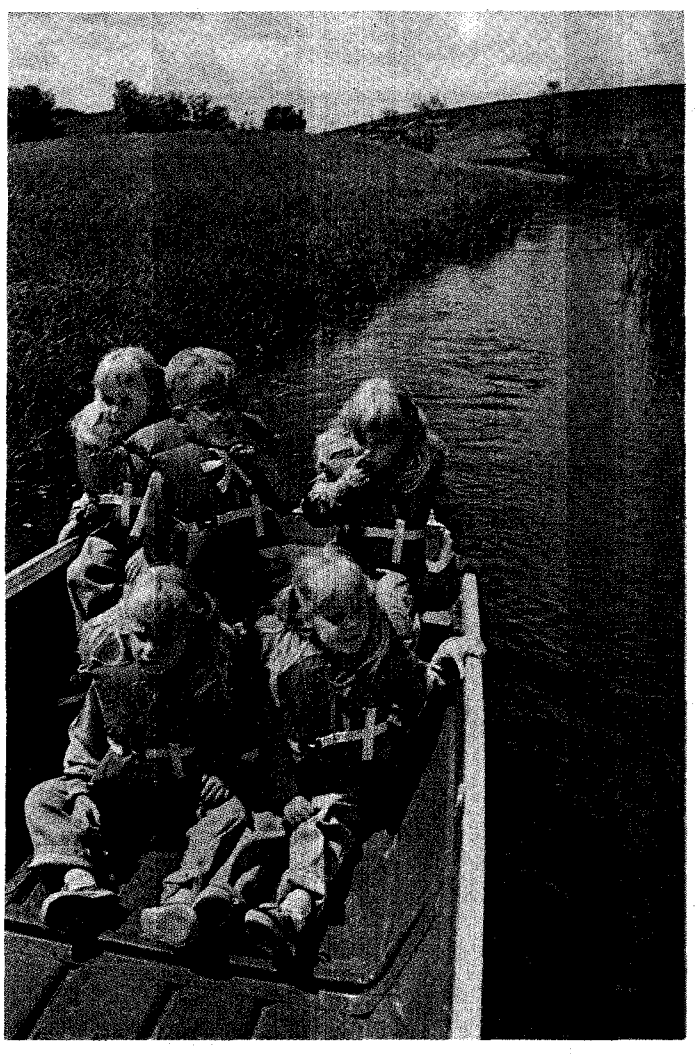
The picnic included potato

tion wagon that was to take the family on its way. The back seats of the Fischer station wagon convert into a large mattress on which the babies can sit or take catnaps. They all piled in—one of the quickest ways to get them into the car is to hoist them through the back window—and the expedition began.

Keeping the children occupied during the hour-and-a-half drive required some constructive thinking on Mary Ann's part. A box of dry cereal proved to be an effective pacifier, as were half-sticks of gum, doled out at critical moments. There were numerous requests for cups of water, which Mary Ann poured from a giant Thermos.

Like all youngsters out for a drive, the quints

When there is no confetti at hand, a bag of popcorn makes a good substitute, as the quints demonstrate. Then it's time for a boat ride. Moments after the photograph below was taken, Jimmy howled to be lifted ashore. At right, five flaxen-haired quints wander through a field of wild mustard and pick a bouquet for their mother.



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hips, peanut-butter sandwiches, popcorn, minced ham and a wide selection of cookies.

enjoyed scanning the countryside for "horsies" and "moo-cows," creatures which abound on the unending expanses of fertile farmland. Starting to grow restless, Jimmy managed to squirm over to the front seat and settled down to doze on Mary Ann's lap.

The children are great imitators and often copy their mother, who is a fastidious housekeeper. When one spilled a cup of water along the inside of the car door, several of them took cloths and tried to mop up the drops.

Later Mary Ann broke off a banana, peeled it, and put it at random into one of the outstretched hands behind her. This action sparked an immediate craving for "nanas" in each of the others. With any sort of treat, Mary Ann must be careful to get enough for all the babies.

On reaching their destination, an uncommon number of arms and legs were sprayed with insect repellent. More insect spray was drenched on the picnic area. Then a large red-and-white-checkered tablecloth was spread out on the grass and anchored with bunches of bananas and an ice chest, containing gallons of milk for the babies and cans of soft drinks for the older children. The menu for the picnic included, besides peanut-butter sandwiches and minced ham, popcorn, potato chips and a large selection of cookies—a spread specially designed to appeal to the four-year-old palate.

Due to the nibbling on the long ride, the children's appetites were understandably poor. Although they greeted the sight of the picnic with shrieks of delight, it was a clear case of eyes being bigger than stomachs. They soon found better things to do with the popcorn than eating it—namely, tossing it into the air like confetti. When the picnic was declared officially over, they picked up the tablecloth and ran with it through the meadow, trying to fill it with wind like an unwieldy sail.

The outing had been planned not to interfere with the children's usual schedule. After their brief play period, the quints and Cindy took a nap in the air-conditioned station wagon. Curled up asleep on the mattress, they looked, in their gay-colored shorts and shirts, like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle put together.

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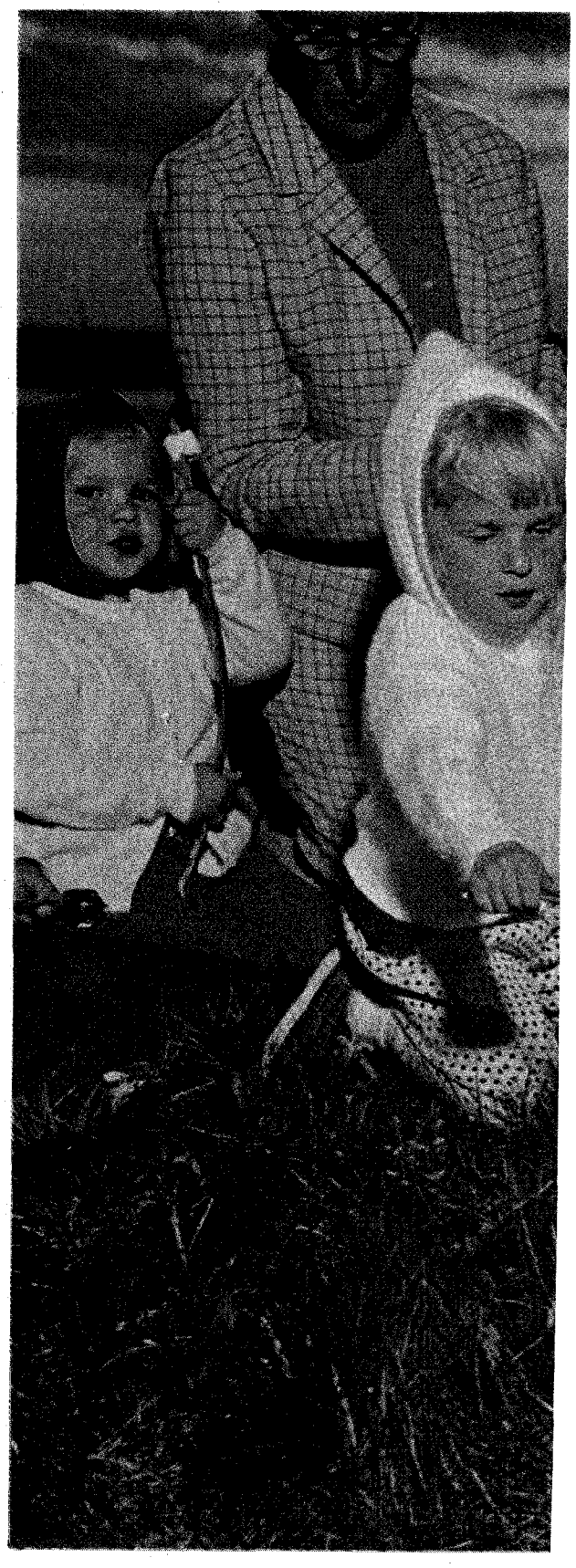
When the picnic was over, the quintuplets picked up th

They awoke feeling, as their father Andy remarked, "full of vinegar." A meandering stream no more than a foot deep cut through the meadow, and the children took advantage of it by donning miniature life jackets and taking a boat ride. Andy and some of the older children walked along the bank of the stream, pulling the towlines. The only unenthusiastic sailor was Jimmy, who demanded to be put ashore and spent the rest of the time fishing (unsuccessfully) with his new toy pole.

According to his mother, Jimmy would be happy spending his whole life out-of-doors, preferably astride his tricycle. In his love of the open air he takes after his 12-year-old brother, Danny, already an experienced naturalist. Jimmy is more standoffish with (female) strangers than his female counterparts. He is a distinctly masculine little boy. Later that day, when parasols were presented to the girls, Jimmy claimed one for himself. His sisters held their parasols fetchingly in an upright position, but not Jimmy. He put his to use as a sledgehammer, denting it on the ground—for which he was firmly reprimanded by Mary Ann.

The next day was spent in a more relaxed way at home on the farm. Mary Ann hoed her garden and kept a watchful eye on the babies. Once in a while one of them would roam off toward the driveway gate, and Mary Ann would race down to round up the stray. The older girls rode their bicycles, zigzagging to avoid gopher holes, or took turns shooting for baskets with lightweight basketballs. The quints are expert at retrieving the balls, but it takes some urging to get them to give the balls back. The older children are forever reporting to Mary Ann mischief perpetrated by the quints. At such times they are likely to refer to the quints by special nicknames, the most popular being "squirt," "snagglepuss" and "bugs."

Watching them so intent on their own pursuits, it is difficult to reconcile these five noisy youngsters with all the fanfare their existence has caused. Understandably, Aberdonians take a tenacious pride in the only recent local event worthy of international coverage. They have put up billboards on all the highways leading into town, welcoming motorists to Aberdeen, Home of the Fischer Quints. Quint fanciers will find newspaper accounts of the quintuplet birth framed both in the local airport and in the lobbies of several hotels. So far, at least, the quints' publicity has not intruded into their lives. They are being raised in a normal family atmosphere, which remains their parents' fondest wish.



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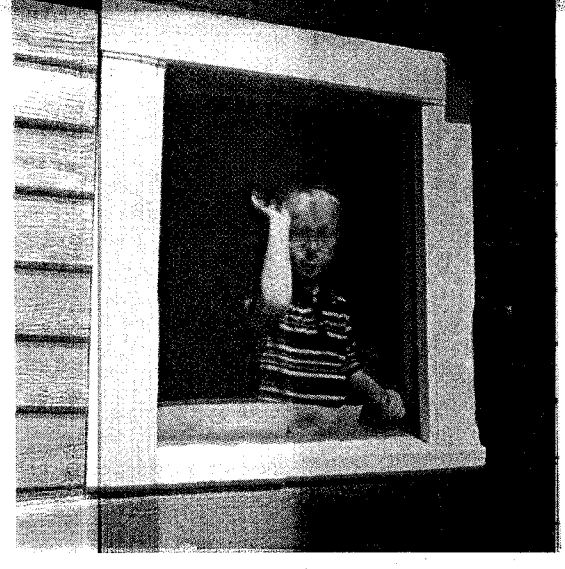
ablecloth and ran with it.

The four swingers at the left are, from the top, Mary Ann, Margie, Maggie and Cathy. Off by himself as usual, Jimmy waves from a barn window in solitary splendor. At sunset the entire family gathers to toast marshmallows on the farm. The child at left is three-year-old Cindy, who considers herself a "sixth" quintuplet. At right is eleven-year-old Charlotte, the oldest of the nine Fischer girls.



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Wildlife in America

By Bil Gilbert

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While naturalists lament vanishing species, hunters know some game animals are steadily increasing. What is really happening to the balance of nature across our nation?

I was not yet school age, so it must have been at least 35 years ago. I was sitting with my father on a log in an oak opening, looking out at a ground fog that hung around us like smoke. Out of the young corn and low mist waddled a skunk followed in precise file by her five kittens.

There was sufficient wonder, drama, beauty involved to etch that moment indelibly on my inner being. The scene is the earliest, sharpest memory I retain. There are various reasons for this, and the most obvious may be that exposure to, and interest in, wilderness and wildlife is quite literally in my blood. My father was a botanist by profession, a general naturalist by avocation. My grandfather was an old-style hunter, convinced that if a thing moved it should

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be shot, trapped or hooked. A great-uncle was a professional poacher. My great-grandmother traveled from North Carolina to Michigan in a Conestoga wagon, carrying two caged mockingbirds in her lap. An even earlier ancestor made enthusiastic if not very good natural-history notes in 17th-century Virginia.

Certain of my attitudes and interests are therefore somewhat inevitable. I have studied (if the definition is stretched a bit) wildlife for as long as I can remember—informally back to the day my father and I watched the skunks, more conventionally in classrooms, libraries and laboratories. For most of my adult life I have earned my living watching animals, following them, collecting them, showing others where animals are, writing about animals. Because I have been able to live in this way, because of my blood, I feel inexpressibly fortunate and, except in those occasional moments of gloom common to our species, seldom envy the way any other man lives.

For most of the past year I have occupied myself in a way that many would think frivolous and nearly all would regard as eccentric—by taking a grand tour of North America for the purpose of seeing how things are going with the species who coinhabit it with me. I have walked four months and a few thousand miles along the spiny Appalachian backbone of the eastern United States, put in a few hundred miles by Jeep, canoe, snowshoe, and seen, heard, felt fine things, frightening things, rare things.

A golden eagle—federally protected, along with patriotic cousins, the bald eagles—sulks (above) and soars (below) in Hells Canyon between Idaho and Oregon. At right, author Bil Gilbert contemplates a Pennsylvania stream.

There is a granite ledge, for example, just below the tree line in a spruce forest. It has been so designed by wind and erosion as to serve perfectly as a rest for a packboard. While I used the rock for the purpose it had obviously been made for, a red squirrel ran through the spruce above my head. He ran for his life, because behind him, running even faster, came death in the form of a pine marten, an uncommon, secretive, indescribably graceful arboreal weasel.

As a nightmare is unforgettable, so is a certain cage of common cowbirds in a laboratory I visited. If you rattle the cage, a bird or two will flutter to the bottom, twitch convulsively and die. The birds die because they have been fed pesticides—the same poisons that make our food prettier and cheaper—in sublethal doses that nevertheless have a deadly effect on the cowbirds' resistance to stress.

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There was an afternoon, when the sun and the air and the water were so clear as to seem effervescent, spent in a boat cruising slowly in the Gulf of Mexico, close to the Texas shore. On the shore fished and loafed 24 four-foot-tall, white, storklike birds. They were quite oblivious to the fact that dominated the whole scene for me—that they, the two dozen birds, were more than half of all the whooping cranes in the world.

During the year there were something like 15,000 miles in airplanes, crisscrossing the continent to see old acquaintances, making new ones in government offices, faculty lounges, ranger cabins, lean-tos, museums, sanctuaries, talking wildlife over desks, campfires, over beers and bottles as others talk baseball or politics or religion. And then, as with everything else nowadays, there were the blizzards and drifts of paper: biologists' field notes, bureaucratic memos, legislative documents, theses, exhortative brochures, press releases, statistical surveys. From that blend of paper, people and pine marten, it would seem, should have emerged some grand theme, a crashing crescendo on the overall status of wildlife in America. However, for me it was not so. The conviction that developed was at best a negative one. When it comes to describing, in big broad ways, how it is with wildlife in America, we are all, from the most astute biologist to the most amateur bird watcher, in the position of blind men trying to describe an elephant. We get a tail here, a trunk or ear there, but the whole is too great for our faculties, imagination, intellect. We are reduced to explanation by example, impression, analogy.

In the first place, wildlife is various. There are 450 full species of mammals and 650 species of birds in the United States. (To say nothing of amphibians, reptiles, fishes, insects, Platyhelminthes, Porifera and Protozoa, all alive and wild. Nothing more shall be said of these creatures, attention being restricted to class Aves, class Mammalia—all pretensions to inclusiveness being abandoned.) Each of these species differs from the others in vital particulars, their requirements for food, shelter, territory, where and when they mate, why they sicken, how long they live, far more than do the two most disparate specimens of *Homo sapiens* that might be collected.

Wildlife cannot be counted as accurately as we count people. Our best statistical information concerns animals of the least ecological importance, those species whose numbers have been so depleted that they are in imminent danger of extinction. Currently 14 kinds of mammals and 36 birds are biologically endangered, and officially so declared by the Federal Government, and some effort has been made to enumerate the survivors. An ingenious biologist named Don Fortenbery, who for the past year has been paid by the Department of Interior to look for black-footed ferrets, has seen 11 of them. There are thought to be 22 everglade kites, 43 whooping cranes, 51 California condors and perhaps as many as 850 grizzly bears.

But aside from this sad, sick band, any census of wildlife is sketchy. State game departments estimate collectively that we have 15 million white-tailed deer. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the world's biggest wild-duck and goose herder, says that last winter we had 20,215,600 ducks and 2,640,600 geese. Last Christmas amateur ornithologists in 720 localities (in a country of 3,615,211 square miles) counted 95,552,522 birds, including 61,050,711 red-winged blackbirds, 13,801,769 starlings, 441,508 robins, 336,123 crows, 39,266 chickadees and 5,737 red-tailed hawks. However, no one

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The sole constant in 'balance of nature' is change.

can tell you how many raccoons, opossums, meadowlarks, meadow mice or bats there are, how much wildlife there is *in toto*. Much less is anyone able to measure the quality of wildlife, how well or badly all the birds and beasts are doing.

It seems to me that perhaps only one generality is worth making about wildlife: Today the common factor influencing the existence of every species of bird and mammal is man. There is no way to contemplate even figuratively how things are with wildlife unless it is recognized that wildlife in America lives today as a vassal of man in America.

That things should have, for better or worse, come to this pass seems more important perhaps to Americans than to other people. That there should be 15 million deer and no passenger pigeons sharing the land with us now is something that most of us know, at least subliminally, and think significant, at least symbolically. The reason may be that, unlike other people, we harbor a sense of having seen the whole thing happen.

"Upon the sixe and twentieth of March, 1602, we went from Falmouth, being in all, two and thirtie persons, in a small barke called *The Concord*, holding a course for the North part of Virginia. . . . On Friday the fourteenth of May, early in the morning, we made land. This island is full of faire trees, of high timbered Oaks; Cedars, strait and tall; Beach, Elme, Hollie, Walnut trees in abundance; Strawberries, red and white, as sweet and much bigger than ours in England, Raspberries, Gooseberries, Hurtleberries, and such. Also many springs of excellent sweet water and a great standing lake of fresh water, which is maintained with the springs running exceeding pleasantly thorow the woodie grounds. This Lake is full of small Tortoises, and exceedingly full of divers fowles as Cranes, Hernshawes, Bitters, Geese; Mallards, Teales, which breed, some lowe on the banks, and others on low trees, about this Lake in great abundance, whose young ones of all sorts we tooke and eat at our pleasure. Here are also great store of Deere, which we saw, and other beasts, as appeared by their tracks. Coming ashore, we stood a while like men ravished at the beautie and delicacie of this sweet soile."

That is how it began. Five years before the settlement of Jamestown, 18 years before the Plymouth landing, John Brereton, a Cambridge divine who later made the above notes, stood on the shores of the virgin North American continent. It was an extraordinary moment in the historical experience of Western man, lasting in a sense only for that flicker of time during which the Europeans paused in awe on the beaches. The implications, factual and fanciful, of this experience—that we started afresh with a fair, sweet land—have shaped the identity of all who have followed Brereton, helped to make us an aggressive, acquisitive, affluent people, marked our collective character and consciousness in ways we do not begin to understand. This is important to remember when considering many matters, especially wildlife.

The phrase "balance of nature" has been used to describe the scene and system that Brereton and a few of his contemporaries entered—as none shall ever again. It is an appealing figure suggesting an orderly, immutably benign world, the antithesis of our contemporary synthetic environment. (For some reason, supreme arrogance or cringing humility, we are inclined to see our species as somehow divorced, opposed, above or below nature.) Nevertheless, balance of nature, even when applied to North America in 1602, is a misleading, inadequate concept giving the impression of a static arrangement. If balance is the figure of choice, then the vision should be of a perpetually teetering balance, a living community maintained in and by dynamic tension.

For example, mature woodlands, such as those which caused John Brereton to marvel, appear to be a permanent, dominant community. The appearance is illusionary. The older a forest grows the more vulnerable it is to fire, wind, blight. Within the forest are armies of living things, choking vines, wood borers and beavers, woodpeckers and porcupines, whose business it is to survive by consuming the woodland. At times these animate and inanimate forces will overwhelm parts of the forest. It will fall and be replaced by a scrub-and-glade community. Deer will move into the new habitat, which provides better browse than the deep forest, and multiply. But with the deer will come deer-eating predators, the possibility of epidemic and severe deer-against-deer competition. Eventually these biological frictions will become too great for the deer. They will decline, sprouts and seedlings that would have been destroyed by deer will mature, and the forest return. So it is with all species, all communities. They are bound together in an intricate, ever-changing web in which one strand of life supports others and is in turn supported.

Major changes in the dynamic balance, the elimination of species (camels once roamed this continent) or the creation of totally new communities (the Gettysburg battlefield once lay under a shallow sea) did occur, were always in the process of occurring. However, the changes were of a slow, evolutionary sort, in response to elemental shifts in climate and topography. At the heart of the system that has been called natural there was constant—and in a sense cooperative—competition among a myriad of peers. The result was to promote diversity of life and to prohibit permanent domination or ruination of the total environment by one species, wood borers, deer, lion, or by any one community, forest, glade or meadow. (Aboriginal man was one of many peers within the system. North American Indians affected the moving balance, but their numbers were too few, their technology too primitive, for them to control it.)

John Brereton, however, represented a new and vastly different force. In 1602, European man already controlled so much energy that he had no peers, and we, the cultural, technological descendants of Brereton, have immeasurably increased the biological gap. With our power and appetites we have moved in as strong as wildfire, earthquake, a rising ocean, changing the web and balance of life much more rapidly than, and as thoroughly as, these inanimate sources of energy ever did.

Canada geese, presumably unaware of the passions they stir in gunners and bird watchers, browse a riverbank.

It was far back in the southern mountains, on a trail that snakes along the top of a deep river canyon. From below the trail came a cracking sound made by something large forcing its way through the dry brush—it was middle fall and most of the leaves had fallen. I expected to see a deer come up out of the gorge but, being an optimist, had the reservation that it might be a black bear—uncommon but occasional in those parts. I was no more prepared for the animal that actually emerged from the brush than I was for a brontosaurus. One moment there was the sound, and the next, 100 feet ahead of me, there was a mountain lion.

She stood poised on the edge of the trail, head cocked, gaunt flanks heaving from the exertion of climbing out of the canyon, tail flicking nervously. Though I stood motionless, she saw, scented, otherwise sensed me, somersaulted like a gymnast and

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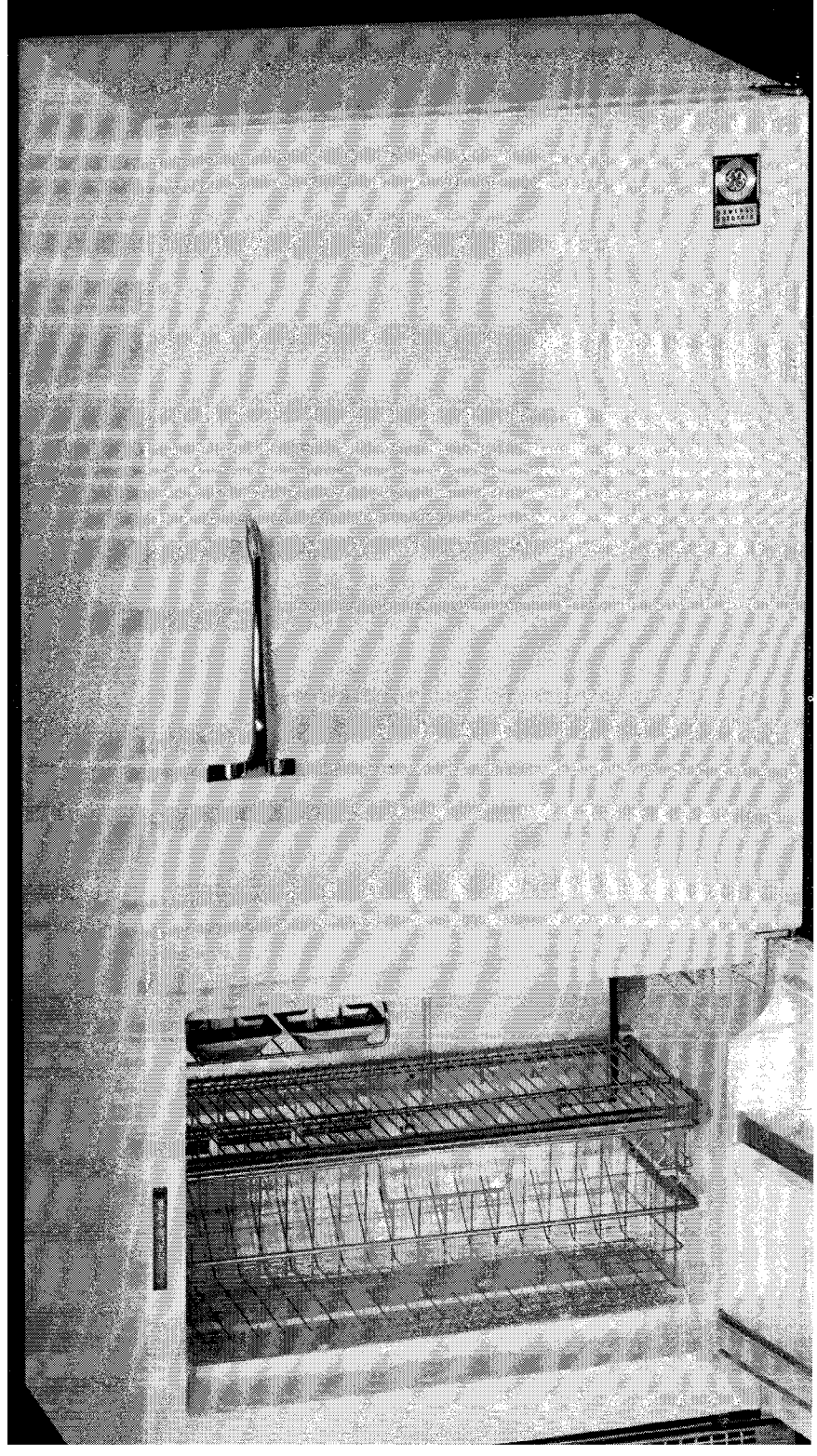

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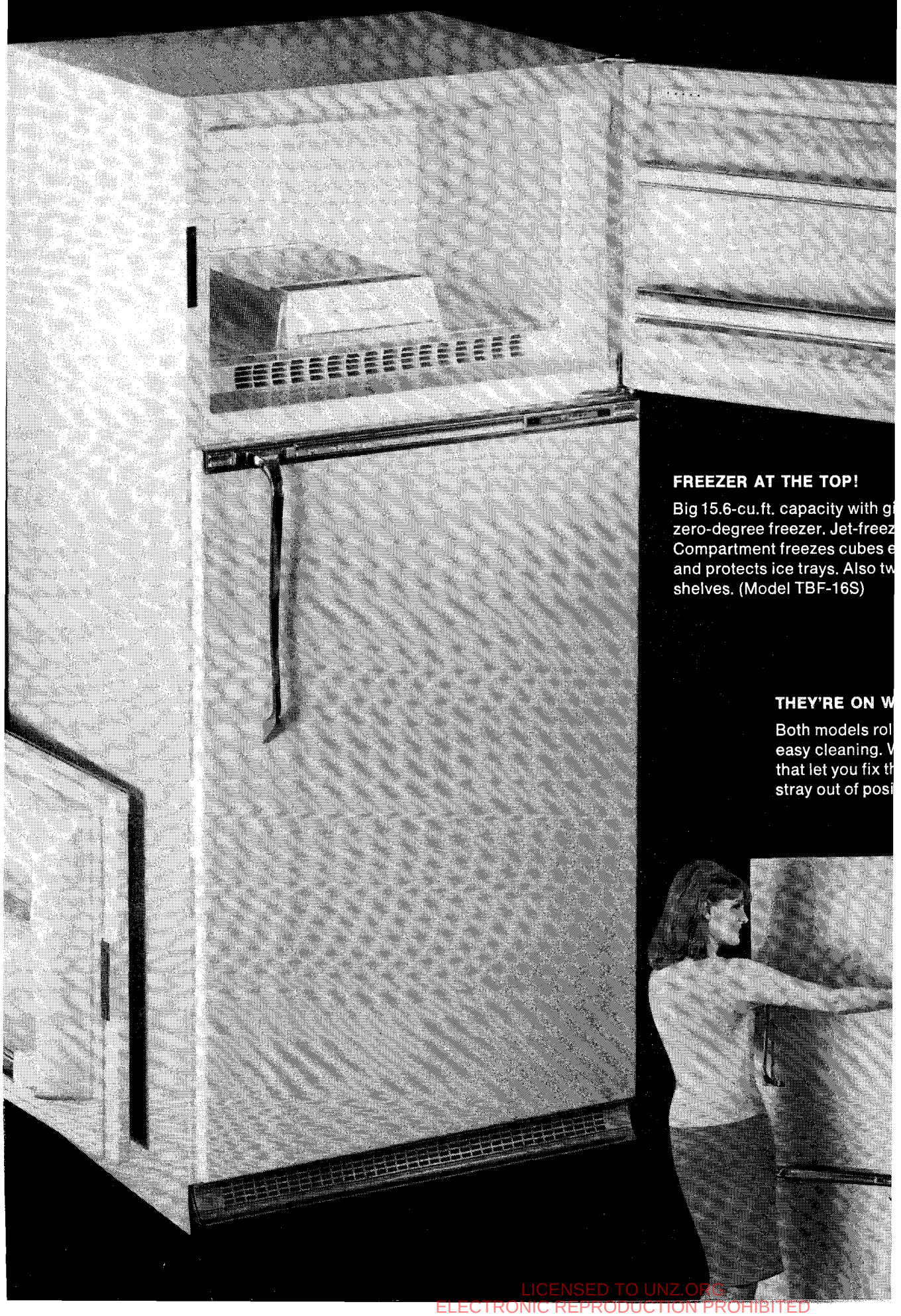

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dived back into the gorge. I ran to the rim, heard her descent but did not see her again.

There is a small remnant lion population, 100 or so animals in Florida. Otherwise, east of the Mississippi there are only old records, rumors and folk stories. Some hopeful biologists believe there may be a few pairs hidden in wild corners of Appalachia. More sober naturalists believe that the big cats are probably extinct in this range.

At the time I was not concerned with these speculations. I was luxuriating in a sense of exclusiveness, good fortune. I had seen something I had never seen before, nor had most other living men. The chances are overwhelming that I will never see such a thing again and could in fact be the last man to meet a lion on a trail in Appalachia. For being in the right place at the right time I had been given something which I prize as perhaps others would an Oscar, Most Valuable Player Award, a military medal. It was that rare.

I have thought often about "my" lion, and I have become abstractive as well as possessive about her. She has become a sort of shorthand symbol representing many processes, events and feelings far removed from the brushy mountain where I met her. "My" lion was perhaps the last of her kind in an enormous area where lions once ranged. She (lions and other animals) came to this condition because men have wanted to, been able to, drastically alter the environment, the natural system that John Brereton saw; and because we have wanted to and been able to prey upon her kind with great efficiency. Finally, whatever future she and they have, if any, rests upon another human characteristic: Seeing a mountain lion in the flesh, as I was lucky enough to do, or simply the idea that in some wild place there is still a lion to be seen, is something of special value—aesthetic? psychological? historical?—for a great many people. The value is so real, if mysterious, that society in general is willing to go to considerable effort to protect wildlife. It seems to me that in a man-dominated system the relationship between ourselves and other species can be examined in light of these three elements of human nature: our ability to alter the natural environment, our capacity to prey on all other creatures and our inclination to admire and take pleasure from wild things.

Of these three attributes, our alteration of the environment has indisputably had the greatest effect on the quantity and quality of wildlife in America. Today there are 1.1 billion acres of land in agricultural production where there were virtually none in 1602. Out of three quarters of a billion acres of remaining woodland, a half billion acres are now commercial forest. In 1602, of course, no forest was managed for the benefit of a single species. Originally there were 125 million acres of marsh on the continent. There remain 75 million acres. We use 400 billion gallons of water daily. We are now building 1.5 million houses a year and other structures—highways, parking lots, landing strips and rocket pads—so numerous that about 15 million acres of land yearly are covered over with concrete, aluminum, glass and other sterile compounds. Finally there are 200 million human beings on our part of the continent, where there were only one million 350 years ago.

The popular notion is that because of all these alterations, all wildlife everywhere is endangered. A report of the last mountain lion in an Appalachian valley or that only 43 whooping cranes can be found in the whole world has led many to assume that most wildlife is in, or moving toward, the same precarious position. The truth is that we may very well have more wildlife in terms of sheer bulk than we have ever had. The reason is that as we have cleared, scraped, replanted the land for our own benefit, we have significantly if unintentionally improved it as habitat for some other creatures. Generally the species that have most benefited by what might be called the rise of man are those which are comparable to man—hardy, adaptable, pushy beasts of high reproductive capacity.

What has been good for man has apparently been good for mice, rats, shrews, raccoons, opossums, skunks and deer. Their numbers and range seem to have increased. The coyote, traditionally a prairie animal, has pushed steadily eastward as other large competitive predators (the wolf, for example) have been eliminated, and is now found in Pennsylvania, New York and parts of New England. Beavers are increasing, nibbling away on field crops and geraniums, damming up man-made drainage ditches with man-planted privet and silver birch. The mockingbird, 50 years ago an exclusively southern species, is now found as far north as Michigan and Massachusetts, doing very well on bird feeders and the fruits of ornamental shrubs. Two of our most common birds, the pheasant and starling, are here entirely as our creatures. Both were imported, and both have multiplied because they were well suited, better suited than many native species, to the environment.

In terms of individuals we may have as much or more wildlife than ever, but we have indisputably less variety. We have homogenized the land, turning more and more of it into better and better habitat for ourselves and some creatures of the starling-coon sort, but at the same time we have reduced the diversity of habitat and the opportunity for diverse species to survive. This is what naturalists have in mind when they talk and brood about the decline in wildlife. The old warning about not putting too many eggs in one basket applies. Specialization has always been biologically risky: One slip, one environmental calamity, and you lose a lot of species.

The fact that 20 species that once lived on the continent are now extinct is the simplest way of documenting the decline in wildlife variety. The first native to go was the great auk, the last survivor killed by a foraging sailor in 1844. The most recent victim may have been the ivory-billed woodpecker, not reliably reported in the last decade. In every case some action by man has supplied the nudge to send the species into oblivion. The loss itself of these creatures is perhaps not so alarming (the process of extinction of species was going on long before man existed; we had nothing to do with the disappearance of the dinosaur) as the rate at which it is now occurring. We are eliminating species infinitely faster than they are created by evolutionary processes. In North America we have lost more species in the last 100 years than Europe has in the past 1,000.

The 50 endangered species, the whooping crane, grizzly bear and that crowd, have become so rare that their survival is seriously jeopardized. For practical purposes they are already extinct, since they no longer have any real ecological impact upon the land or other creatures. There are also many birds and mammals which, though they may be abundant in some places, have become regionally extinct. Wolves, jaguars, bears, elk, moose, bison, eagles, falcons, and my mountain lion once ranged widely, but have virtually disappeared east of the Mississippi.

The gross, mechanical alteration of environment has been going on for three and a half centuries, but a new element has recently been added: our ability and inclination to poison great chunks of land, water and air. There is a river called the Moshannon that flows north through a narrow, wooded, largely uninhabited valley of the central Pennsylvania highlands, eventually emptying into the west branch of the Susquehanna. Along the upper Moshannon there are numerous gouts, seeps and upwelling pools that rise from the mountain and pour down into the river. They function as springs, but are not. The sources of these flows are old coal mines, man-made caverns within the mountains. The liquid does not look like, smell or taste like water, and chemically it is not water. It is a sulfuric-acid solution, compounded of water mixed with an inexhaustible supply of mine wastes in the old pits. It is yellowish, malodorous and poisonous.

By the time this special kind of springwater reaches the Moshannon channel, it has lost most of its color and smell. The river flows and looks like one of those crystal-clear streams in barbershop calendars. The catch is that it is clear because it is sterile, a river of acid. For the last 30 miles of its course there is not a fish, snail, beaver, muskrat, kingfisher or turtle to be found in the Moshannon. The banks are largely bare, stained rusty red by residual chemicals in the flow.

I canoed this weird river once and will never go back to it. The Moshannon frightens me. It stinks not only of acid but of death and the end of the world. When I canoed the Moshannon, I was thinking not so much of the disappearance of the beaver and fish as I was thinking, friend, of the disappearance of me and of you.

Examples of the effect on wildlife of poisoned environments are almost as numerous as examples of pollution; however, a classic case involved the fire ant. The fire ant was inadvertently imported into this country 35 years ago and by the mid-1950's had become sufficiently well established in the southeastern states to be a pest. In 1958 the Department of Agriculture decided to do something about the ant but chose a technique roughly equivalent to using a hammer to kill the fly on baby's head. It was announced that two poisons, heptachlor and dieldrin, would be broadcast over a 27-million-acre, nine-state area, at the rate of two pounds per acre. In the 400,000 acres first sprayed, the poison did indeed control fire ants—but also a lot of other creatures. Nobody really knows how much wildlife was killed, but in sample areas the loss of life was for many species between 80 and 95 percent of the total population. The fatalities began with earthworms and worked on up through insects, reptiles, birds, small mammals. There were also widespread losses of poultry, cattle and other domestic animals. The ensuing uproar caused a sort of My-word-we-mixed-that-batch-a-little-strong-didn't-we? response from the Department of Agriculture, and spray dosage was reduced to one quarter pound per acre. The program still goes on, despite the fact that even today nobody knows whether a quarter pound an acre is safe. All that is known is that the large visible creatures do not die from these applications, at least not right away in large numbers.

The fire-ant incident is fairly typical in this matter of pollutants. Anti-pollutant action is seldom taken except in crisis situations, when there is fear that people may be dying from poisoned cranberries, from the water they drink or the air they breathe. A principal reason for this attitude is that potent forces in our economy depend upon either selling pollutants or quietly disposing of them. There interests often center around the Department of Agriculture and the agricultural-chemical industry. Such organizations are, to put it mildly, not wholeheartedly in favor of alarming announcements about and research into the sublethal poisons that they are in the business of making, selling and promoting.

Lou Clapper is the chief of conservation education for the National Wildlife Federation, and his view of this situation, while admittedly partisan, has implications for us as well as our furred and feathered friends: "A deliberate campaign is being waged to discount dangers related to uses of chemical pesticides. The results of a staff study undertaken by the House Appropriations Committee emphasized the values of chemicals in controlling pests. The study attacks adverse criticism of the use of chemical pesticides. The principal thrust of the staff study, as we read it, is that 'little harm is known to result from the use of chemical pesticides, and the public should not be alarmed.' This study then became the basis for industry-originated publicity. One release says that this year birds are singing, 'Take a deep breath and relax.' Another asks, 'Is the world to be kept for people or pests?'"

To consider pollution of the environment exclusively in terms of its effects on wildlife is as ridiculous as outlawing nuclear warfare because it poses a threat to the whooping crane: Pollution affects all life from one-celled plants and animals up to, especially up to, man. However, it is also ridiculous to try to consider the present and future conditions for wildlife without recognizing that all of us live in an environment that daily becomes more foul. Perhaps the importance of wildlife is its function as a barometer of what is happening to man.

The arguments of those who use and dispose of pesticides, herbicides, noxious fumes, industrial wastes, sewage and radioactive materials often make good sense in conventional business, political and even social terms. In essence they say that they can do things more quickly and profitably by working with these poisons than if they did not. This would be well and good if the subject at hand were simply something so trivial as the gross national product and not the gross substance of my liver,

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lights and lungs. The arguments for the environmental poisons tend to become, or be intentionally made, technical, but nobody has ever proved that any pesticide, any sulfuric-acid spring, any smog cloud is biologically good for you or me. The largest claim that even the most ardent pushers of poison make is that the chemicals are only a little teensie-weensie bit bad for us. On the other side, there is an ever growing number of personally frightened, though not sentimental, research scientists who are saying that these poisons are much worse for us than we ever imagined.

Like it or not, voluntarily or involuntarily (you can choose whether or not to smoke a cigarette, but if the air you breathe is poisoned you don't have much choice), the level of poison in each of us, men, mice and angleworms, is a little higher today than it was yesterday. Eventually the dosages may become large enough to kill us outright. But even if this does not happen, at least for some time, there is a growing suspicion that the poisons are subtly, progressively enfeebling us physiologically, and may well be distorting our behavior. The laboratory cowbirds that become deathly intolerant of stress after ingesting pesticides are but one example. Other studies suggest that sublethal dosages of environmental pollutants may increase aggressiveness and hostility, render parent animals less able to care for their young and induce general behavior that can be described as biologically destructive.

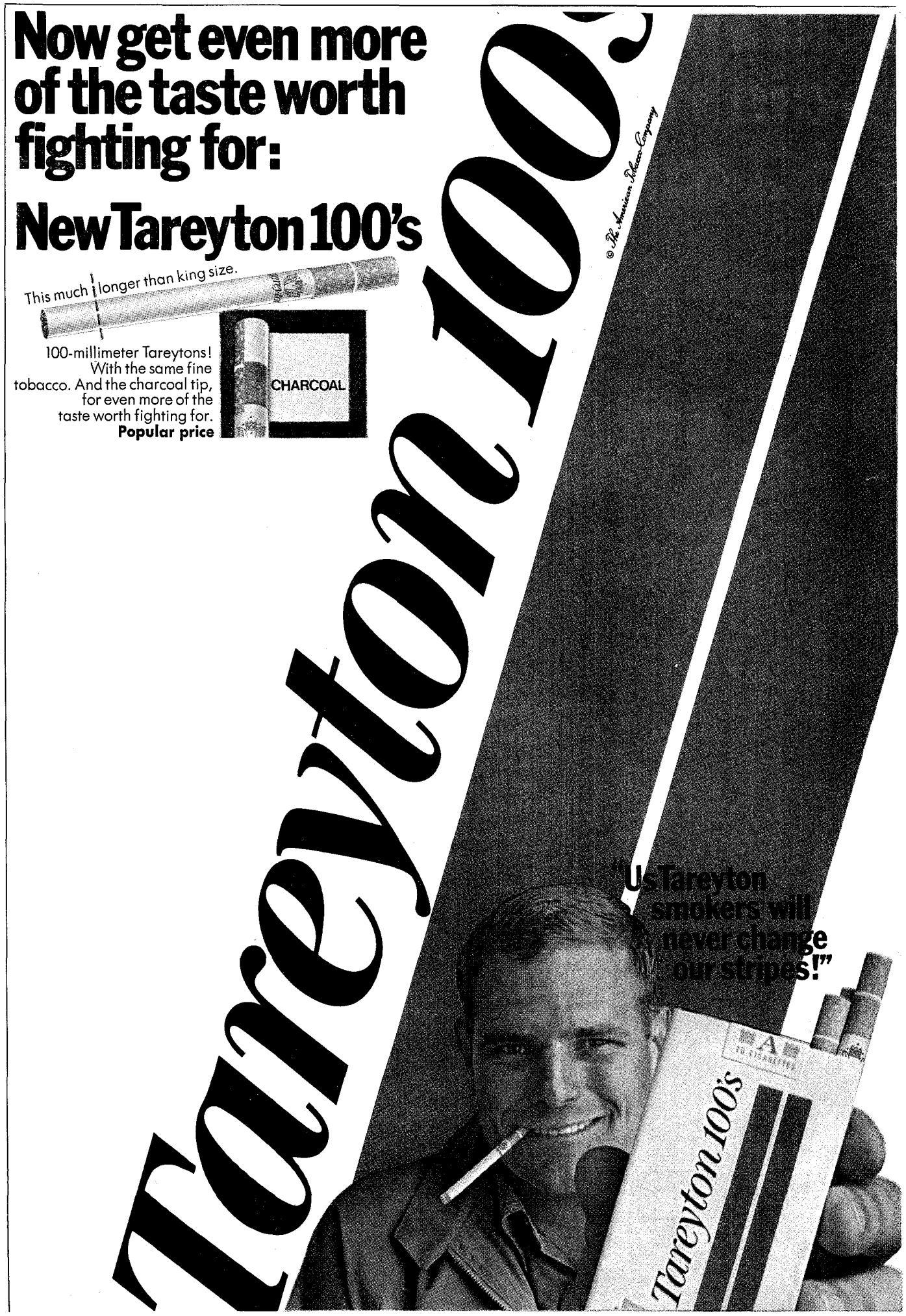
"There is no technique yet for proving it in a lab," said an old friend, a biochemist, one night, "but while our problems are increasing in difficulty—not just wildlife, for God's sake, but all of them, political, economic, ethical—our ability to deal with them may be decreasing. Because we are ingesting increasing amounts of poisons that create irrational responses. And they worry about a few kids taking LSD."

For me it boils down to this. If a man is trying to raise or lower my taxes, fiddle with the cost of living, draft or defer me, fire or hire me, censor my reading, send me smutty mail, kill or protect my mountain lion, my inclination is to argue for or against him, support or oppose him in at least a semi-civilized manner. But if I have even the suspicion that he is trying to poison me, my family, my friends, my species, I am going to raise all sorts of particular hell, and I am not much concerned about polite debate, the gross national product or *Robert's Rules of Order*. As far as I am concerned, such suspicious characters have to prove they are not poisoning me as a first condition to negotiation. If they can't so prove, then I am not going to be satisfied until they stop—not just gloss over with press releases—what they are doing.

It will not do any good if the maybe-poisoner says, "Look, if I quit using these maybe-poisons, my profit will be drastically cut, the cost of your maybe-poisoned potatoes will go up, and a lot of deserving citizens will lose their jobs." All this may be true, and if so it is too bad, but I really don't give a tinker's damn. If we have to poison ourselves to live for a few more generations in the style to which we have become accustomed, then the style should be changed—quickly. I can go back to a sod hut or even a cave if I must, but I smelled death and extinction as well as sulfuric acid on the Moshannon—and not for birds and beavers.

Our environmental tinkering, the bulldozing, draining, poisoning of the land, has unquestionably had more influence on wildlife than has any other activity. However, as a rule it has not been inspired by hostile or benign feelings toward wildlife. We have changed the scene John Brereton saw because we wanted to make things more comfortable for ourselves. Those who, like me, are most keenly interested in mountain lions and the other difficult creatures ought to remember that Manhattan cannot be both a city and a habitat for prowling beasts, and that the building of New York was not a plot to make lions rare. However, our influence on wildlife has been quite intentional in other respects. The most obvious has been in our role as predators. With great persistence and skill we have killed other creatures for food and pleasure, for hides and feathers, or because they competed against us or, not infrequently, because they were simply immoral varmints that bugged us. ("That which is not useful is vicious," wrote another 17th-century preacher, Cotton Mather, of animals.)

During the course of the grand tour, I ended up one afternoon in a hardware store in a town in northern Minnesota. The conversation turned to a wildlife phenomenon in that part of the world—timber wolves are returning. This is not to say that wolves are about to appear in right field of the Twins' stadium. According to a biological sur-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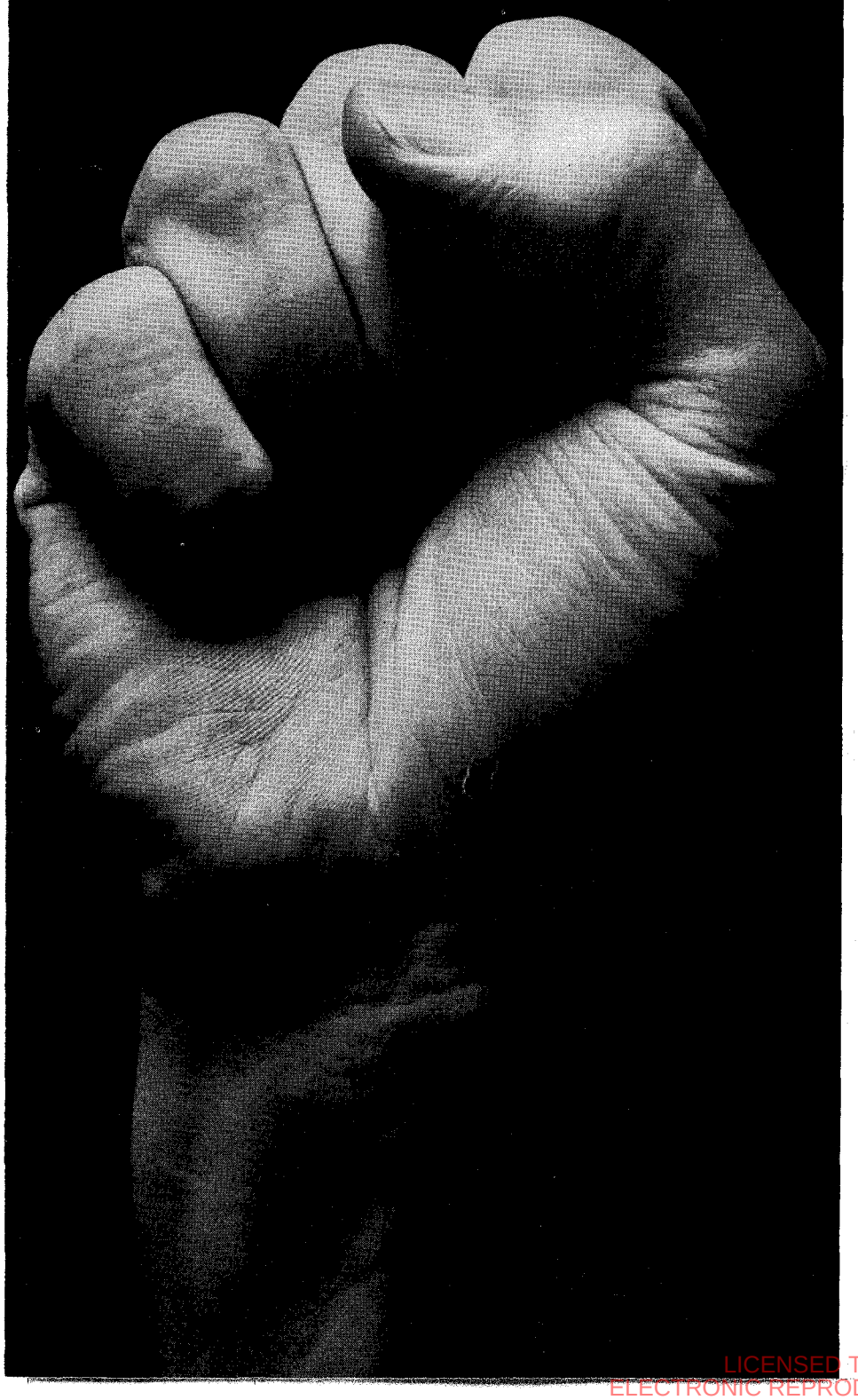

veyor, about 200 of the big predators may have drifted down from Canada and succeeded in establishing themselves in the woodsier parts of the state. This has pleased people who like wolves, or at least the idea of wolves, but it produced a lively political issue in the last Minnesota state elections. The question was whether to establish a bounty on the animals and in this way to exterminate them. These matters were the subject of an informal seminar being conducted in the hardware store, during which another customer contributed a field note. "I run into one of them last fall, deer hunting. First wolf I'd ever seen wild, but I knowd right away what he was. He was so goddam big. He came down a trail just about dark, upwind of me. I guess he didn't know I was there. I shot him clean, easy."

The impulse to kill any creature that is frightening, rare, unknown, or just there, is one which I recognize as common. My grandfather, with whom I was often and admiringly in the woods, would, I suspect, have reacted to the wolf in the same way. Here and there I have learned some things worth knowing from hunters, and I have met among them approximately the same number of bloody sadists as among bird watchers. Though I often find the hunting response to wildlife curious and unimaginative, I worry about the morality of hunting to about the same extent that I worry about the morality of having five fingers. Hunting is an innate, apparently genetically imprinted behavior pattern. (I express it, even though I may tend to disguise it under a cloak of scientific investigation, when I trap a shrew, dissect him and pop his carcass into a bottle of formaldehyde.) I am not at all convinced that, even if it were possible to eliminate hunting, this would constitute an ethical breakthrough. Such deep, instinctive habits, if denied outlets in such form as shooting a duck, almost always come out in another way, say shooting your neighbor's dog—or your neighbor.

All of which is not to say that because the hunting urge is there it is always constructive. Some animals such as the great auk, heath hen, perhaps the passenger pigeon, were simply hunted into extinction. Human predators helped to reduce the populations of bison, elk, whooping cranes, trumpeter swans, wolves, bears, lions, various seals, the martens, fishers, otters, wolverines—to name only a few. Horror stories about what went on between us and the bison, passenger pigeon and sea otter are part of American folklore.

These predacious orgies, however, are now largely a thing of the past. One reason is that killing animals is no longer so profitable or legal as in the days of market hunting and the fur trade. Sports hunting is now the chief outlet for our predatory instincts, and for the past 50 years, faced with the prospect of becoming extinct themselves for lack of prey, the better sort of sports hunters have supported most protective conservation measures. Hunters' money, collected in license fees, has been the single most important source of funds for wildlife research and management and for the acquisition of protected wildlife habitat.

"There are no outstanding technical—I'm not saying anything about environmental—problems of wildlife management today. No game species is endangered, and hunters are chiefly responsible for this situation," says Joe Linduska, associate director of the Federal Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, who formerly managed a "model" farm for Remington Arms Company. This statement may seem a bit self-serving, but there is no reason or way to challenge the truth of it.

On a balmy winter's day such as gladdens the heart of every Florida Chamber of Commerce man, Jack Allen, Frosty Anderson and I were sitting in a boat in a mangrove swamp arguing about the social utility of wildlife. The mangrove swamp is in a place called Rookery Bay, a few miles south and seaward of Naples, Fla. Jack Allen is the manager of the section of Rookery Bay that is a National Audubon Society sanctuary. Frosty Anderson is the director of all 45 Audubon sanctuaries scattered about the country. When you are in the middle of 4,000 acres of mangrove islands, one channel, one passageway or one island looks very much like the other. The humiliating fact is that we were lost.

"How long does an Audubon warden have to stay in a swamp before he eats an eagle?"

"A long time," said Jack Allen. "Eagles are very tough. But if we are still here tomorrow morning, I would not absolutely guarantee the safety of a nice tender wood stork."

As it turned out, we were not in the mangroves the next morning and, in fact, before dark were back in Naples eating crabs and drinking beer. However, we had during the day a good bit of time for the conversation about social utility. What is the value of having a sanctuary for waterfowl, especially when access is denied the general public in order to protect the birds? Frosty Anderson, being in this line of work, had all the official answers down pat: irreplaceable resource, storks eat frogs, opportunity to study the ecological (to say nothing of navigational) mysteries of a mangrove swamp. However, it was not the kind of day, situation or company in which official answers thrive.

"Look," said Frosty. "In absolute truth I am not here because of social conscience. I am here because I like this place. Why I do, I don't know. I defend it because it gives me pleasure. I am against people that are against things I like. I am glad I have a chance to earn my living trying to protect things that I enjoy."

There speaks an honest, if lost, man.

Our interest in wildlife as prey began at the beginning. "The young ones of all sorts [waterfowl] we tooke and eat at our pleasure," wrote John Brereton. But he also wrote that he and his companions "stood a while like men ravished at the beautie and delicacie" of the scene—thus he introduced the third part of our attitude toward wildlife. Quite simply, the birds and animals of the continent, for reasons no one clearly understands, have always given us great pleasure. We have liked them. It is hard to give a name to this feeling and the activities it inspires, much less analyze it. It has been called nature loving, the nature aesthetic, and nowadays in various public agencies is spoken of as the "nonconsumptive use of wildlife resources" (in opposition to

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"consumptive use," which means hunting and fishing). Whatever it is called, this sort of wildlife appreciation seems as innate as our predatory instincts, while its practical effect has been negligible during most of our history. Occasionally a hunter would pause to admire a buffalo before he pulled the trigger, or a farm family would raise an orphan raccoon as a pet. However, people who simply want to see animals, know they are there, who have no designs on their flesh, hides or plumes, are now close to supplanting hunters as the most numerous and influential of the wildlife special-interest groups. "Nonconsumptive" users of wildlife were not sufficiently numerous to deserve mention in a 1960 Department of Interior survey. By 1965, however, there were 11.5 million wildlife watchers compared to 13.5 million hunters—with the hunters a million fewer than in 1960.

The recent rise of the nature lover is causing something of an upheaval within the wildlife establishment. Wildlife men are now trying to decide what the devil these people want and how to placate them. "We are increasingly feeling pressure from nonconsumptive users," says Dr. Stanley Cain, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, "and we are trying to work out programs that will appeal to them. The days when we were exclusively duck-and-fish farmers are gone."

This then is my thesis, such as it is: that our overall effect upon wildlife stems from our ability to alter the "natural system," from our predatory urges, or from our inclination to admire and cherish wildlife. If this is so, then perhaps how these three factors combine to affect wildlife can be illustrated by describing how things are with a small bird and a large mammal.

The Huron National Forest is a 700,000-acre federal holding, mostly jack-pine prairie to the north of the thumb of Michigan. "This is terrible country," says Bill Irvine, in that bragging, knocking, self-mocking tone men use to speak of undesirable places, things and people to which they are unaccountably attached. Irvine is a wildlife biologist attached to the Huron Forest. "In the summer the dust chokes, and the bugs bite, and the sun boils the resin out of the trees and you. Then in the winter . . ." Irvine shrugs and gestures with an open hand as if to offer the jack-pine prairies on the 14th of December. A few inches of dirty snow lie on the ground. Snow and sand are in the air and in the back molars, the abrasive mixture driven along by the skinning wind that blows over northern Michigan out of Canada and forever.

The whole of the Huron is not attractive, but the corner of it which Irvine displayed on December 14 was absolutely grim. In every direction for several hundred acres there was charred evidence of fresh fire: windrows of soot, blackened stumps, a few large pines standing dead above the wasteland. It occurred to me that the only possible use of the scene would be as a dramatic background against which Irvine, in full forest-ranger uniform and holding a Smokey-the-Bear poster, might pose for an anti-fire photograph.

But as is often the case everywhere, things are otherwise than they seem in the Huron. Rather than moralizing about people who are careless with cigarettes, Irvine was explaining with professional pride how he and 60 federal colleagues, using a variety of arsonic devices, had burned up the half section of National Forest. The firing had not been accident; it was part of an ecological plan aimed at preventing the extinction of a songbird called the Kirtland's warbler.

The Kirtland's is a small, inconspicuous bird. If the 1,000 existent individuals of this species were piled on a scale they would weigh only 30 pounds. In the 19th century the warbler was known to winter in the Bahamas, but it was not until 1908 that its summer breeding ground in the Michigan jack pines was discovered. Subsequent investigation showed that the warbler nested no place else, and only on the ground under the protective, spreading boughs of adolescent 7-to-20-year-old jack pines. Because of this restricted range and nesting habit, there never were many Kirtland's, perhaps 3,000 at most, and through the century the tiny population has declined.

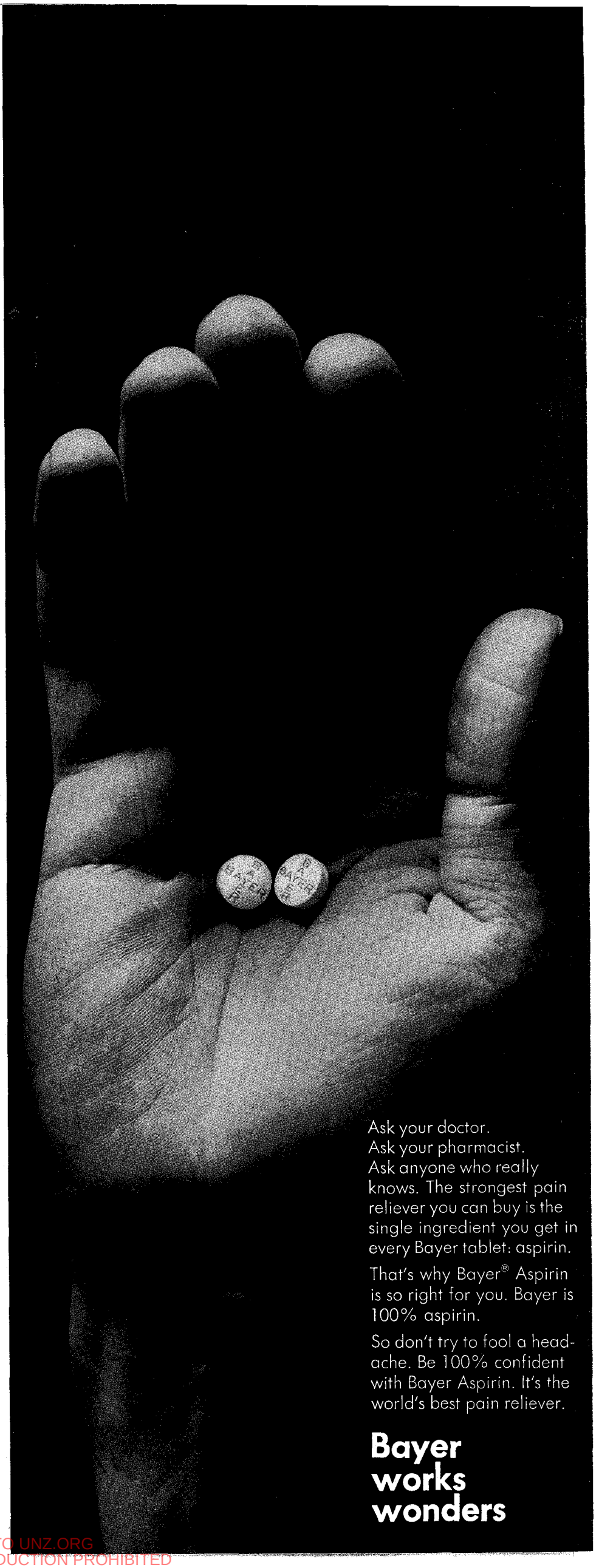
The jack pine, like the warbler that nests under it, has some curious reproductive habits. It is what foresters call a fire species: Jack-pine cones do not open to drop seeds except when exposed to heat of 300 degrees Fahrenheit—when there is fire. In the bad old pre-Smokey-the-Bear days, fires touched off by lightning, cigarettes or campfires periodically ravaged the jack-pine prairie, destroying mature trees but leaving behind in the ashes viable seeds. However, by the late 1930's most of the jack-pine lands had been acquired by either the national or state forest services. Fire prevention meant no young jack pines.

The solution of burning and bulldozing was suggested rather hesitantly by several professional ornithologists, backed strongly by various bird clubs and readily agreed to by the federal and state agencies. The first warbler burn was made two years ago, and the plan calls for firing adjacent blocks of woodland every other year, providing a continuous succession of jack-pine growth for the warblers.

Though it is too early to claim ultimate success, there is no question that trying to save the Kirtland's warbler has been good politics and good public relations. It may also be good biology. However, the temper of the times is such that even if these "practical" considerations did not exist, the effort would probably still be made. Working for the salvation of this small wildlife hostage has made a lot of people feel good, moral and righteous. This is no insignificant value.

There would seem neither reason nor way to compare the Kirtland's warbler and the white-tailed deer. The deer is our most abundant, conspicuous, big-game mammal, ranging over three fourths of the continent. Because deer hunting, deer killing, displaying dead deer on automobile fenders is fraught with symbolic significance, the white-tail is important to hundreds of wildlife biologists, millions of hunters, and to a multibillion-dollar deer-hunting industry. Despite these differences, the 1,000 warblers and 15 million deer are comparable in one meaningful way—both are equally in bondage to man.

Deer are more numerous now than they were in the 17th century for two principal reasons. First, much of the forest that covered the continent has been cleared and replaced with scrub,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glade and meadow, which provide better deer browse than is found in heavily shaded woodland. Second, sports hunting has unquestionably helped to increase the number of deer. Hunters have replaced natural predators as the control that keeps deer from becoming too numerous. Hunters prevent not only starvation but also epidemics, lowered reproductive rate and destructive overgrazing of the land. By juggling the length of seasons, number and sex of deer killed, state game-management experts have been able to protect deer from themselves.

A curious but general phenomenon associated with the effort to increase the deer crop for hunters has been that the wildlife biologists have often had more difficulty managing hunters than deer. Many hunters are opposed to laws that permit the shooting of does and fawns—even though such shooting is a good herd-control measure. "The last stand of chivalry in the United States is, 'Don't shoot a doe,' " says Dr. Ira Gabrielson, president of the Wildlife Management Institute. In Michigan this issue has brought game managers letters written in doe blood, and game commissioners have been hanged in effigy on the capitol lawn.

At the moment a new crisis is brewing. In 1935 there were 90,000 deer hunters in Michigan, and they killed 30,000 deer; in 1965, 600,000 hunters bought licenses but killed only 100,000 deer. Despite the increase of deer, the chances of killing a deer are less than half as good now as they were 30 years ago. Since it is neither politic nor practical to cut back the deer-hunter herd, the only solution is to increase the deer herd, but this can be done only if more land is set aside for the primary purpose of raising deer. At the moment, deer range in Michigan is full, and available range is decreasing. Forests such as the Huron are being managed to produce large, mature trees that are of little use to deer. Also in Michigan, as elsewhere, land is being withdrawn from the wilderness to be used for construction, at the rate of 200 acres a day, In order to satisfy their hunter clients, Michigan game managers have proposed that the state acquire about 500,000 additional acres, which they will bulldoze and turn into scrub land suitable for white-tails.

"We could use two million deer right now," says Dr. Ralph MacMullan, director of the Conservation Department. "And we could have them. We know how to grow deer. All we need is the land to raise them on. If we burned off or bulldozed all the state parks, forests and recreation areas and turned them into deer scrub, we could have two million deer, maybe five million. Naturally, deer scrub isn't too attractive for other things—camping, summer cottages, picnicking, communing with nature, growing other animals—but that is for the people to decide. They can have about as many deer as they want and will pay for."

Dr. MacMullan's comment on the Michigan deer herd has application in many areas and to many species. If we cared to do so, the 500,000 acres now being eyed as new deer range in Michigan could theoretically be managed for the benefit of the Kirtland's warbler, and this bird might be made as common as the song sparrow. On the other hand, if protective hunting regulations were abolished and the effort to establish great swatches of synthetic deer habitat were abandoned, white-tails could conceivably become a rare species in a relatively few years. (Remember the buffalo?)

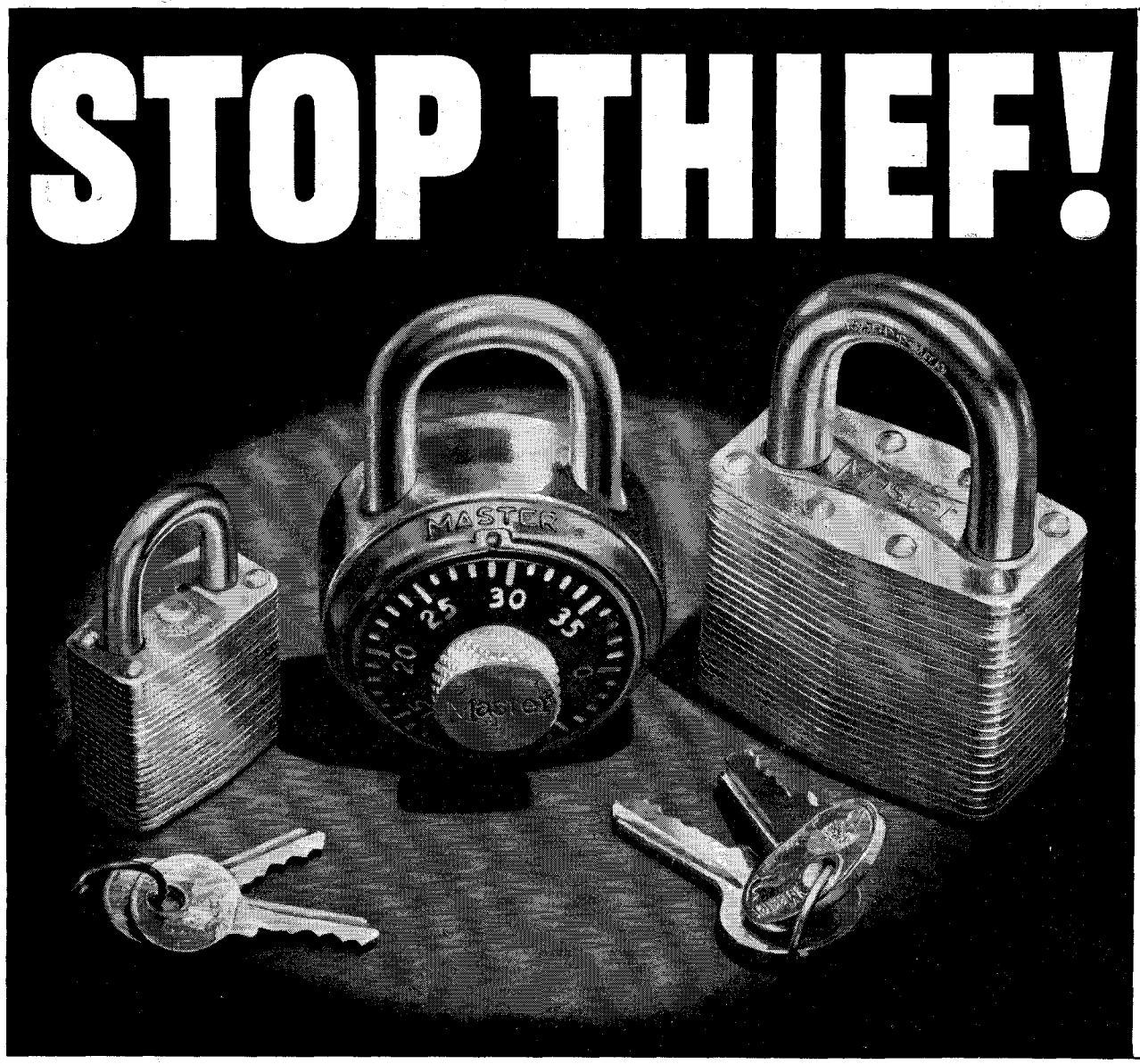
As this man-dominated biological system has developed, so has our awareness of it. Each year the National Wildlife Federation (actually a loose kind of confederation) publishes a *Conservation Directory*, which is a guide to the wildlife establishment. In the directory are listed approximately 360 private groups that have some direct interest in wildlife. They range from The Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock (a Baltimore group whose stated purpose is "to teach our youth the true meaning of conservation") to the Garden Club of America (which wants to "translate the principles of conservation into personal action"). Over half of the 123-page directory is devoted to listing state and federal personnel responsible for wildlife affairs. This is as it should be, since in America all wildlife is owned, or at least regulated, by either the state or federal government. (In many other countries wildlife is privately owned. If you have a hedgehog or stag living on your land, he is yours to use, abuse or save as you choose.)

Federal responsibilities for wildlife are sharply defined by law. Because of a treaty with Canada and Mexico, the Federal Government has taken over the management of migratory birds. Special legislation has also put two nonmigrants, the bald and golden eagle, under federal protection. Federal agencies are involved in wildlife because they own almost a third of the country, some 750 million acres. However, as a landowner, the Federal Government's influence is limited largely to controlling the environment, not the wildlife therein. Except for animals in National Parks and Refuges, all wildlife, from mice to moose, belongs to the states.

Most state conservation agencies have somewhere in their legislative charter a pious phrase or two about being responsible for "all the wildlife resources of this great Commonwealth." However, as a practical thing, this responsibility is exercised almost exclusively in the management of game animals. The reason is obvious. Until very recently nobody gave much of a damn about creatures that were not hookable or shootable. Furthermore, in nearly all states, wildlife protection, management and research are not paid for out of general funds but by hunting- and fishing-license fees and by a federal tax (almost all of which is returned to the states) on sporting equipment, Under these circumstances it is natural that the states should be more concerned with moose than they are with mice.

The state and federal agencies determine how wildlife can be used, by whom and for what. Around the public servants, pulling at them, influencing them, lobbying for and against them are the private organizations representing portions of the public who, one way or another, want to use wildlife.

Though they may campaign for more game, cheaper game, more accessible game, hunting-oriented organizations generally favor continued state control



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of wildlife resources under existing policies and agencies. The hook-and-bulleters maintain that their actions and their money have established them as the most effective conservation group. In response, nonconsumer groups point out that hunters became conservationists only when forced to by their own excesses. The watchers have not forgotten, nor do they let others forget, what hunters did to the passenger pigeon, bison, grizzly and many other species. Nor is the traditional distrust eased by the fact that every once in a while a hunter is known to take a potshot at a whooping crane or condor.

A fairly telling anti-hunter argument is that in most states somewhere between a third and a half of the money hunters contribute is spent enforcing laws that protect wildlife from hunters. Despite a great deal of talk about the new breed of conservation-minded hunters, there is not a professional wildlife manager in any state who will not admit under pressure that if all hunting restrictions were removed, or even if enforcement officers were withdrawn from the field, most of our game species would quickly be reduced to mere remnants of their present populations.

In a general way nonconsumers tend to favor greater federal control of wildlife. Again there are both biological and political reasons. Many wildlife problems cut across state boundaries, and federal management is therefore logical. Proportionately, there are more biologists in the federal establishment interested in broad ecological problems (as opposed to narrow preoccupations with a few game species) than there are in the states. The nonconsumers feel that federal agencies are, or at least should be, less beholden to hunting interests than the states because they are less dependent upon sportsmen's money. For example, the current budget of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife is $99 million, of which only about $5 million from the sale of federal duck stamps is contributed directly by hunters.

"There are deep ethical and emotional divisions between consumptive and nonconsumptive users of wildlife," says John Gottschalk, director of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Gottschalk is well qualified to speak. Recently he was roasted in a *New York Times* editorial for running his bureau principally for hunters. A few weeks before, he was the villain of a "goose war" in Wisconsin, where state officials claimed the bureau was trying to deprive Wisconsin hunters of their rightful number of Canada geese and even served summonses on employees of a federal wildlife refuge. "The bird watcher can go along rationally with the idea that game-management hunting has been good for game species and maybe even wildlife in general, but in his heart of hearts he just doesn't like killing anything," Gottschalk says. "The hunter may be polite to bird watchers and admit this is a *bona fide* sort of recreation, but he has a strong suspicion they are all sentimental little old ladies in tennis shoes, who would like closed seasons on everything."

Wildlife policy comes out of the interplay among the various individuals, agencies, organizations, alliances and feuds within the wildlife establishment. Of all the issues current and controversial, two have caught the interest of the public and are of especial significance within the wildlife establishment: What to do about the coyote? and what to do about rare and endangered species?

Traveling across the high plains, I stayed one night in a small town in eastern Montana. On a Saturday night the barroom-dancehall-social-center in the one hotel in this town is a wild sort of place. For a stranger, at least, the entertainment comes on very strong, so by and by I took a break and went outside for a walk. The town is one of those six-blocks-along-the-highway, two-blocks-wide settlements peculiar to the prairies. There is no tapering off of civilization. You just come to the last house, and beyond there is nothing—no lights, no signs, no streets—just black, unoccupied space. Beyond the last house I stopped to smoke a cigarette and think conventional thoughts—eternity, the insignificance and impermanence of our works, the kind of things that almost anybody would think while standing staring off into the night across the high plains.

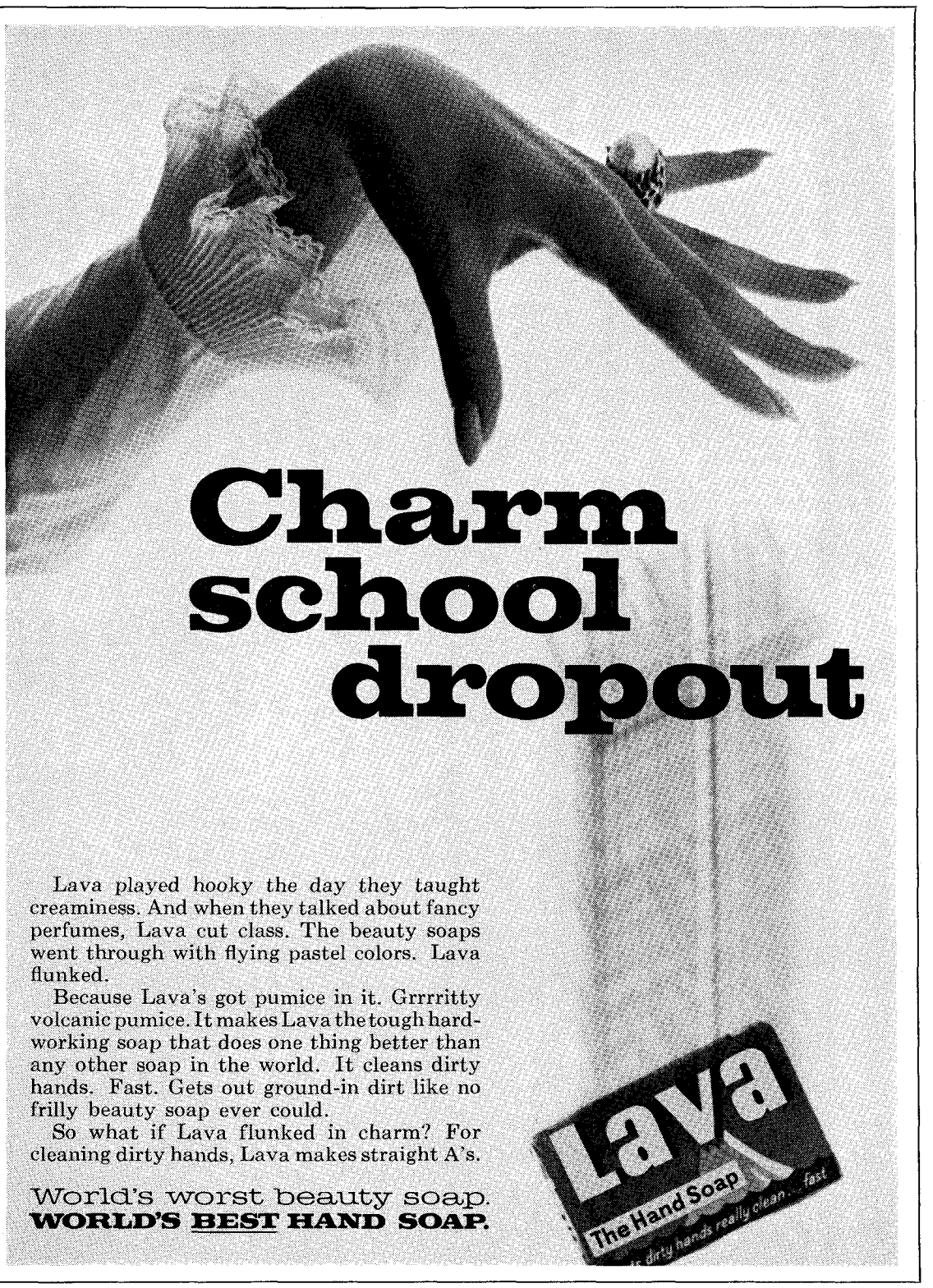
While I was thus occupied, a wailing, sirenlike sound rose out of the dark from the other side of town. It started almost as a whine, wavered, wobbled, then became a howl. The coyote held the last note, as a bugler who is a bit of a stylist will hold the final lonely note of Taps longer than is really necessary. The coyote howl is corny, the cliché of innumerable shoot-'em-up movies. However, it is also true that nothing else quite so well represents that which once was and still remains feral in our land as the coyote song. And perhaps beyond everything else, that is what we seek in wildlife.

The coyote does not spend all his time howling and being symbolic. Like everybody else he has to hustle for a living. A coyote can and will eat watermelons, corn, grasshoppers, mice, birds, jackrabbits, antelope, deer. Included in between are sheep and goats, particularly lambs and kids. This taste has brought the coyote (numbers untabulated) into direct conflict with 70,000 western ranchers who raise sheep and goats, and with the Government of the United States, which has taken upon itself the job of saving its sheep- and goat-raising constituents from the coyote. This in turn has brought down on the sheep, goat, and federal men the wrath of conservationists. The resulting controversy is, in terms of passions aroused, a sort of wildlife Vietnam. The ranchers want coyotes killed, preferably more than are now being killed. The conservationists want fewer or no coyotes killed. Caught between these opposed interests is the Federal Government.

In 1966, 700 employees of the Division of Wildlife Services (hereinafter DWS) and the Federal Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife killed (the euphemism for this harsh verb is "control") 154,640 mammals which they or somebody else had determined were destructive predators. Among the animals controlled were five of the estimated 850 remaining grizzly bears, 280 mountain lions, 5,095 badgers, 8,132 raccoons, 17,453 foxes and 1,640 beasts identified simply as "others." However, none of the animals bagged was so numerous or so politically hot as the 77,258 coyotes controlled by the DWS.

The federal coyote controllers work through a series of cooperative agreements with the western states. The agreements are similar to one a citizen might sign with an exterminating firm. The state pays a certain sum of money, and the DWS agrees to do what it can about the coyotes. The money may come directly from general state funds, or it may be raised by ranch interests. In Texas, for example, where there are more coyotes killed than in any other state, local groups known as "wolf clubs" are formed by sheep and goat men, the membership dues going to finance the federal operation. Overall, about 70 percent of the federal coyote-killing program is financed by state or local funds.

The coyote-killing project has grown steadily since it was initiated about 50 years ago. It now operates in all the western states except Missouri, which has refused to sign a cooperative agreement, and the money spent by the DWS has almost doubled in the past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decade (it's now about seven million dollars a year). Coyote-killing expertise has also evolved. To guns, steel traps and poisons, which were formerly the standard tools of federal controllers, has been added an arsenal of more advanced weapons. A device known as a coyote-getter is very popular and said to be effective. It is a piece of hollow tubing driven into the ground, loaded with an explosive cyanide cartridge and tipped with a scented bait that is also a trigger. When a coyote or anything else grabs the bait, the cyanide explodes in the animal's mouth.

As the coyote-killing operation has grown, so has the violence of the complaints against it. Some of the complainers are cattlemen who believe coyotes are themselves useful rodent controllers, or who simply like to have a few coyotes left around the place for local color. (Coyotes seldom if ever prey on cattle.) Fur trappers as a rule also oppose the DWS on the grounds that federal trapping and poisoning controls a lot of animals that they, the fur trappers, would themselves like to control. However, the hard-core opponents of the coyote killers are nature lovers. Their suspicions, criticisms and dislike of the DWS have caused a high-level investigation of the division, a series of congressional hearings and an inordinate amount of bad blood.

The headquarters of the Defenders of Wildlife is a pleasant, airy suite of offices overlooking one of the more genteel blocks of Connecticut Avenue in Washington, D.C. These offices are the domain of Mary Hazell Harris, who is the principal bane of all coyote killers (and others who mistreat or ignore wildlife). Miss Harris is often nominated by consumptive users of wildlife (say, sheep and goat raisers), who know her only by her works and words, as the archetype of all little old impractical ladies in tennis shoes. This is not at all how I remember Mary Hazell Harris.

Miss Harris is unquestionably a charming, dignified, articulate lady. When you stop by to talk with her, you talk over a bowl of mixed nuts, a tray of fresh fruit and a teapot. Miss Harris is not small, being in fact rather large-boned, but she is trim and poised. She dresses somberly in the traditional style of middle-aged lady executives. As for her being impractical, it should be noted that Mary Hazell Harris has during the past five years put 70,000 sheep and goat ranchers, 700 federal controllers, and an Assistant Secretary of the Interior or two squarely on the defensive about coyotes.

Miss Harris and the Defenders of Wildlife are as much the natural enemies of people who kill coyotes as coyotes are said to be of sheep and goats. The D.O.W. was organized in the 1920's as the Anti-Steel Trap League and has about 12,000 members. Mary Hazell Harris became interested in predator control about 10 years ago after reading a critical article in a conservation publication. "It simply made my blood boil," recalls Miss Harris. "I never realized such things were going on in a supposedly civilized country." Eventually Miss Harris quit her government job (administrative—nonwildlife), went to work for D.O.W. and now serves as the organization's executive secretary.

"Coyote killing," says Miss Harris, "is a method of subsidizing a few politically powerful ranchers. Tax money is used to continue a wasteful, inhumane, wicked program. The coyote, like so many of our natural resources, is being sacrificed to private economic interests. Too often the public doesn't realize what has been lost until it is almost gone."

From the Defenders of Wildlife and other sources it is possible to compile a treasury of anti-coyote-control criticisms. They would include:

- There is no need for the control, or at least for so much of it. Sheep ranchers exaggerate their losses, blaming coyotes for deaths that may have been caused by poor range management, starvation, exposure or disease.
- Coyotes are an interesting, historic animal, and they have an important ecological role—that is, they themselves act as a natural control on rodents and other creatures.
- Control techniques are dangerous for other species. Coyote-getters, traps and strychnine are claimed to have killed California condors, grizzlies, wolves, lions, eagles, domestic dogs, horses and cattle. In the fall of 1966 a Texas oilman was accidentally controlled by a coyote-getter, though the device was not set out by a federal operative.
- DWS field men are overzealous, inclined to control not because of need but simply to build up a good record to show their rancher patrons. They are careless or reluctant in their observance of the division's own restrictions on the use of poisons.

To all of which sheep and goat raisers say something that sounds like "phooey." The ranchers say their coyote losses are real and serious, perhaps running as high as $40 million a year. As for blaming coyotes for everything, any rancher worthy of the name can tell the difference between a sheep mauled by a coyote and one that has died of liver flukes. The best available means of controlling the coyotes is the present federal program. If there are some abuses—well, anybody can make an occasional error, and you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs, and who are you for, people or varmints? The suggestion that coyotes might be overcontrolled is thought by the sheep men and their allies to be malicious propaganda put out by impractical sentimentalists ("socialist bird watchers," says one Texan).

A few weeks after having the nice tea with Miss Mary Hazell Harris, I had a rattling good Jeep ride through the prickly pear and mesquite of south Texas with a small, grizzled, agile man whom I will call Buck. Buck is what the Department of the Interior calls a "field agent of the Division of Wildlife Services" and what Miss Harris calls a "federal poisoner." If one's information about coyote controllers came entirely from the D.O.W., one might expect Buck to be a bloody-minded, cruel, brutal man, a monster out of Lucrezia Borgia by Genghis Khan. I found the abstraction as inaccurate as that of Miss Harris, the impractical little old lady in tennis shoes.

Buck is a country man, born and bred of the agricultural-laborer-ranch-hand class. His outlook is rural and provincial, and the men he admires are ranchers who have made it, the men who pay his $300-a-month salary. He is shy of strangers, unsure about the motives and good sense of someone who will come halfway across the continent to watch him do a routine day's work. But like all professionals he tends to unbend when he is on the job.

The day I was with him Buck was checking coyote-getters, set out earlier in the week, to see if he had got anything. We stopped first at a small dilapidated house owned by a man named Fernandez. Fernandez has 200 acres—a garden patch in this part of the world—a few sheep, chickens, hogs. We went to the house to get the key to the fence gates and chewed the fat for a while with Fernandez. A month before, he had lost two hens, and there was no question in his mind that coyotes had taken them. "They're as thick as fleas on a hound around here," he said.

Whatever the density of coyotes was, it had been reduced by at least one during the previous night. In back of Fernandez's stock pond a big dog coyote lay dead, its lips drawn back in a fixed, tortured snarl, 50 yards from where he had sampled one of Buck's cyanide-charged coyote-getters.

"What do you think he really did here—anything?" I said, nodding from the dead coyote to Fernandez's place. Under the circumstances the question was awkward, but after all, asking is the business of tourists.

Buck has a seamed face but very wide eyes that give him a curious look of aged innocence. He also has an old pipe, the cracked stem mended with tape, and the habit of chewing on it hard while considering hard questions. "Fernandez?" Buck said, looking at the ground in wide-eyed wonder. "He ain't really got enough on this old place for a coyote to bother much. Maybe it was coons got his chickens. You sometimes hear the damnedest things. Fellow says to me once, 'Buck, you got to do something. The coyotes is so bad they're climbing into the trees to get my chickens. I know it is them for I see their tracks on the ground underneath the roost trees.' I just say, 'Yessir, that's a terrible thing,' and I come out to his place with coon traps. Ain't any point arguing with a man that thinks a coyote is swinging in his trees."

"Why bother?" I asked, coming back to the dead coyote once again. "Putting out all these getters for only two chickens—maybe?"

"Well, he sure has got coyotes. That is a fact," Buck answered tangentially. "We'll just step on down back of the water a little bit."

I have always had considerable admiration for people who can do small, common things very well—pick cherries, light a match every time in a strong wind, saw a straight line by eye. Buck trotting through the prickly pear was admirable. It doesn't seem like much of a trick, but it is. I can get through the honeysuckle and catbriers of the Appalachians pretty well, or run rapids in a canoe, but prickly pear, about which I know next to nothing, gives me fits. Buck could slip along, never having to change pace, never getting jabbed. If nothing else, it convinced me that when it came to what went on in the prickly-pear country, I would do well to listen to this man.

"Look," said Buck, pointing at a path through the cactus that was full of coyote tracks. "They come moving through here a good little bit this time of year. You have got to put your getters where they is at. Fernandez has got 'em all right. You can see that."

"But they don't really bother him?"

"I guess if they just stay here it would be all right, but they don't. They move on. One you get here ain't going to be getting lambs over yonder. It just ain't possible to raise sheep and coyotes. You know they'll come along at lambing time and just rip an old ewe open before she drops her lamb. I seen twenty, thirty laying in a pasture dead from one night."

"Sort of 'a good coyote is a dead coyote' is the idea?"

Buck chomped on the taped pipe stem and opened his eyes even wider, rather than frowning as most men would. "You're trying to say that maybe I just plain hate coyotes," he said. "Truthfully, I got more respect for a coyote than any animal and a lot of men I know. He is a smart, tough one. I chased him enough to know. He's just trying to get along like we all are. But he'll get along too good if you don't keep at him."

The probability is that there will never be a confrontation between the real Mary Hazell Harris and the real Buck. For one thing, their native haunts, Connecticut Avenue and the prickly-pear scrub, are too disparate. I have a hunch that if the two ever did meet they would get along better than they or anybody else suspects. They have much in common—honesty, tough minds, natural courtesy, a true feeling for wildlife. In an attempt to arrange some accommodation between the abstractions of these two people, the nature lover and the coyote killer, the Secretary of the Interior appointed a committee of well known and theoretically unbiased biologists to study what Dr. Stanley Cain, an assistant secretary, called "the predator mess." The committee was headed by A. Starker Leopold, a University of California zoologist and one of the most influential people in the wildlife establishment.

The preamble of the Leopold Report, issued in 1964, sounds as if the distinguished committee may also have stood listening one night on the edge of that eastern Montana town. "The large carnivores are objects of fascination to most Americans, and for every person whose sheep have been molested there are perhaps a thousand who would thrill to hear a coyote chorus." From there on, the report got worse as far as the sheep and goat raisers were concerned. The DWS was criticized for propagandizing against predators in general, soliciting requests for control, misuse of poison, and in general being too beholden to ranch interests. The committee did not (could not, for lack of information) get into the matter of whether coyotes were being significantly threatened by the control program. However, the point was made that if you hire 700 people to kill animals, they are going to kill something to keep their jobs. "Some of the damage on which predator-control programs are predicated may be far less serious than is purported," summarized the committee. Sheep and goat men heartily dislike the report and see it as a first step in the withdrawal of the Interior Department from the coyote war.

On the other side, conservationists who agree with the Leopold Report are incensed because the Interior Department has not acted quickly and unequivocally on the recommendations. Consequently, nobody got what he really wanted, an agreement to kill

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more coyotes or fewer coyotes. The chances are that things will continue in this vein for a while, with both sides being enraged but neither being able to rout the other. Nevertheless, the coyote is now a public issue, whereas only a few years ago he was seldom anything but a target. This may constitute, for the moment, the real significance of the great coyote war.

During House hearings on predator control in 1966, the president of the National Wool Growers Association, George Hislop, was confronted with a statement to the effect that because of "control," among other things, species such as the grizzly bear, wolf, mountain lion and eagle had become rare, their survival endangered.

"Is that necessarily bad?" Mr. Hislop asked.

Purely from a political and public-relations standpoint, it was an unfortunate reply. The wildlife establishment and probably the majority of the public think it is very bad that some species of native wildlife have become rare and endangered. Many people are interested in these creatures (a rare thing is always interesting, if for no other reason than that it is rare). How many whooping cranes return each winter to the Aransas Wildlife Refuge is annually a front-page news story. At the root of this interest is a sort of collective guilty conscience.

The Los Angeles area is the home, at least in spirit, of much that is new—the surfer, the dragster, the teeny-bopper. Curiously enough, it is also the last home of something very old, an enormous vulturelike bird called the California condor. Prehistoric in both appearance and fact, the condor is one of the oldest surviving species in North America. It now survives, just, in the dry, crumbling San Gabriel Mountains that rise above the northern Los Angeles suburbs.

Early one morning I met a federal biologist named Fred Sibley at a coffee shop in the valley town of Fillmore. We drove into the San Gabriels to a section of the Los Padres National Forest that has been set aside as a condor sanctuary. When the road ended, we walked a mile or so farther through the red-barked madrone trees and the spiny xerophytic scrub to an outcropping of rock. Sibley believed that condors might fly up the valley below us, so we sat on the rock and waited for this happening, waited until late afternoon.

"When they advertised for the job, they wanted somebody who was a technical rock climber. I didn't know a *rappel* from a robin, but I wanted the job. I was near Washington, so I went out a couple of weekends in the Potomac gorge with friends, and they showed me a little bit about rope work."

Sibley, a big blond man in his early 30's, is more than just an energetic, enthusiastic, talented man. He is an entertaining man. After an hour of watching from the rock he stood up and unexpectedly let loose with a really extraordinary bellow, a cross between a moose and hog call. "That usually gets them," Sibley said, shaking his head wonderingly when no condors answered the blast. "They must be sacked out." Later the 6-foot-2, 200-pound ornithologist walked over to an open patch of scree, staggered, clutched at his heart and toppled to the ground. After playing dead as a possum for a while he gave it up. "Not hungry either," Sibley explained.

"Fred, what are you going to tell your grandchildren when you have to explain you spent the best years of your life watching vultures? Why do you do it?" It was one of those *pro forma* questions to which no answer is really expected. A real answer would take a biography, a family tree and a history of Western civilization. Sibley fielded it neatly.

"Hey, new record."

"What do you mean?"

"Most visiting firemen ask me why I'm here after about fifteen minutes or so. A New York photographer went an hour once, but you've just gone two. New record."

An obvious answer, but not the sort either of us had in mind, is that Fred Sibley spends his time waiting on condors in the San Gabriel Mountains because the Government of the United States pays him to do so.

The public concern for the condor and other creatures in similarly precarious situations culminated in October, 1966, with the passage of the federal Rare and Endangered Species Act. Involved were 169 creatures. (Officially, an endangered species is in immediate jeopardy of extinction; a rare one is not immediately threatened, but is so scarce that a slight shift in ecological factors might cause it to be so.) The act called for the Department of the Interior to take protective action, conduct research and acquire up to $15 million worth of land as sanctuaries for these animals.

At the moment, research is the principal activity in the rare-and-endangered-species program for the good reason that not much is known about most of the animals except that they are scarce. There have been some rather intensive laboratory studies, and four biologists have been assigned to field projects. The everglade kite, the black-footed ferret and the condor each has its own man, and one biologist is assigned to half a dozen rare Hawaiian birds. The California condor, Fred Sibley's charge, once ranged over the continent, but in recent years its territory has shrunk to that small area between the suburbs of Los Angeles and Bakersfield. The condor range is centered in the Los Padres National Forest, where a 16-square-mile section has been set aside for the exclusive use of the birds, Sibley and an occasional visiting fireman.

The last (1966) condor census found only 51 of them. In a general way, the shrinking of their range and numbers seems related to a reduction in available food. As the mountainous areas were settled, grizzlies and mountain lions, whose kills of deer and elk fed the condor, were eliminated. Cattle, whose carcasses now appear to be the principal condor diet, provided some of this food, but cattle ranchers naturally try to manage their herd to avoid losses, not to feed vultures. One management technique has been to set out poisoned carcasses to kill predators. Some condors have unquestionably been killed by eating these baits. Hunters have bagged a few, simply because a bird, soaring, drifting on 10-foot wings, makes an easy, inviting target. In the 1920's and '30's, when oology was a fad, egg collectors raided many condor nests. Moreover, condors apparently abandon their nests or roosts if disturbed. They need a lot of room.

One notion that colors the thinking of Sibley and others is that a species, like an individual, may become senile, and the condors may be an example of this phenomenon. Certainly the need of the big vultures for isolation, their failure to adjust their feeding habits, their slow and erratic reproductive rate, do not give the impression of a vigorous species. Perhaps the great birds are simply too old and have outlived their time. However, even if this is the case, it does not detract from the importance of Sibley's studies (the process of extinction is a mysterious one of wide implications), nor from the public interest and curiosity about these living remnants of the prehistoric past.

Along about three o'clock in the afternoon, when the sun was beginning to descend, and the San Gabriels were commencing to turn purple, two tiny specks appeared far out across the valley. "Condor," Sibley said matter-of-factly. The two birds came toward us, flying wingtip to wingtip, following each other's movements like synchronized swimmers. They soared over, passing only a quarter of a mile away, looking inexpressibly graceful and old.

"I'm here because they are still here," Sibley said unexpectedly, throwing away the line, never taking his eyes off the great birds.

Don Fortenbery is the black-footed-ferret man, and with him I spent three nights in the South Dakota Badlands, looking for ferrets. In late afternoon we would park the Jeep in the middle of a prairie-dog town. Every four or five minutes, after nightfall, we would sweep the ground with a spotlight, hoping to pick up eye shine from one of the nocturnal ferrets. We worked at this all night, in hour watches, one of us spotting while the other rolled up in a sleeping bag. Frequently a jackrabbit, looking pale, ghostly, as large as a cocker spaniel, would be caught in the light; occasionally a coyote, a porcupine or a coon, but never a ferret.

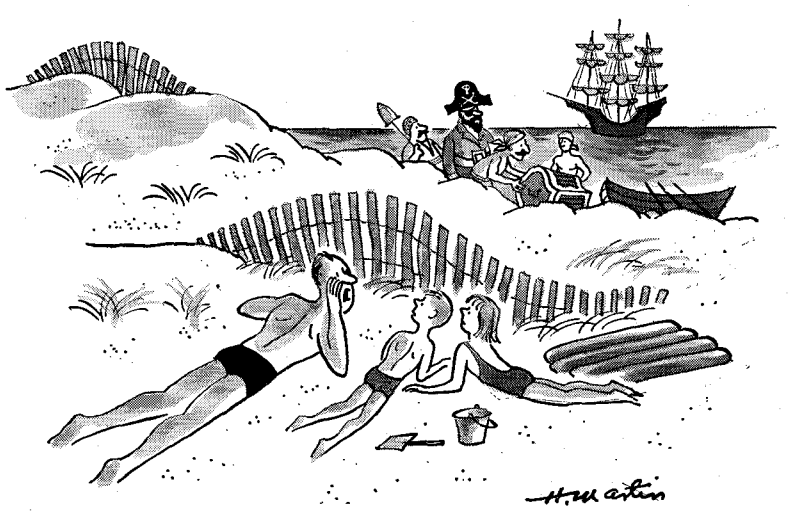
The ferret is perhaps the most mysterious and rarest of all North American mammals. The mink-sized predator was first scientifically identified in the mid-19th century, disappeared from view for 50 years and was rediscovered in this century. It is a plains animal, almost always found in prairie-dog towns. It is assumed that it feeds on the rodents and uses their burrows. "But we don't rightly know," Fortenbery says. "I have seen ferrets kill prairie dogs, seen them drag a dog down a hole, but not actually eat one. I need to know what goes on underground."

There may be more black-footed ferrets than there are condors, perhaps 100, 500, but nobody can prove it. Scattered ferret reports of varying reliability have come from a huge area of the great plains, from Texas and Arizona to North Dakota. Fortenbery has devoted considerable time to checking out these rumors. He has done some investigation of ferrets which turned out to be mink, skunks, Siamese cats.

"Every now and then I get a call or a letter from someone who says, 'We understand you are the ferret expert.' By damn, if I'm the expert, I'd like to meet the fellow who doesn't know anything about them." As Fred Sibley has a touch of Ivy in his voice and manner, so Don Fortenbery has been marked by his own native habitat, the Kentucky hills. But commonly they both give the impression of men reveling in work nobody else has ever tried.

Though the ferret research is even less advanced than that on the condor, the problem of how to protect the animals is more pressing. The prairie dog, with which the ferret is associated, has been traditionally regarded as a pest, and as such he has come to the attention of the federal exterminators. Ranchers and range ecologists claim the dogs destroy range, but many wildlife biologists say the rodents only appear when the range has been ruined by overgrazing of cattle. Whichever side is right, the fact remains that just as sheepmen want coyotes killed, cattlemen want prairie dogs poisoned, and the federal controllers are willing and able to do the work. Wildlifers say that the poisoning is the direct cause of the near extinction of the ferret: Their food supply and habitat have been affected by overcontrol of the dogs, and ferrets probably eat poisoned dogs and are themselves poisoned.

Because of these suspicions and complaints, the Interior Department in June, 1965, issued an emergency order banning all federal prairie-dog poisoning in the South Dakota area that is thought to be the center (if any exists) of the ferret population. Fortenbery is the man expected to find out where the ferrets are. In areas where he cannot absolutely document their presence the poisoning will be resumed. There are,



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"If you will please lie flat and be perfectly still for 15 minutes, Daddy will buy you each a Popsicle."

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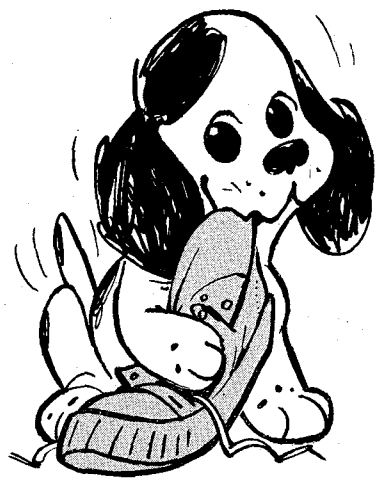
a puppy'll eat anything



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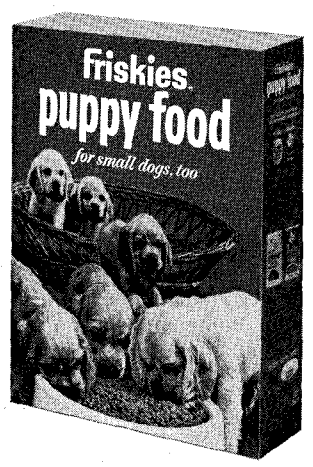

from Carnation®

therefore, pressing reasons for him to spend night after night sweeping the frozen plains with his spotlight.

Though nearly everyone is in favor of saving the rare and endangered species, the federal program has stirred up a considerable controversy over states' rights. Many states and state- or hunter-oriented organizations fear that the rare-and-endangered-species legislation will be used as a wedge to allow federal control of nonmigratory species, traditionally the wards of the states. "There is an important principle involved," says Ralph MacMullan, the Michigan Conservation Department director. "We don't object to federal assistance, and we are not uncooperative. We've worked well together on the Kirtland's warbler, for example. But what we don't want is to wake up some morning and have the Feds say, 'Your deer or quail or turkey may be endangered some day, so we are taking over.' "

Congressman John Dingell, who is himself a Michigan politician and who saw the Rare and Endangered Species bill through the House, disagrees sharply with MacMullan. "It is the management failures of the states," says Dingell, "that have made these species endangered—and, of course, caused the extinction of many others."

Behind all controversy over endangered animals, the coyotes, deer, poisoned wildlife, displaced wildlife, lurks the question, "Why bother?" The challenge has been phrased as "Who are we for, people or birds?" or as "What are forty-three whooping cranes good for?" Recently it has been taken up by analysts whose interests are more sociological than biological.

Wildlife, runs their argument, is no longer of much direct economic importance. We don't need it for food. And, with a few relatively unimportant exceptions, we don't need to protect ourselves from it.

Answers to this argument are many and varied. The most direct and practical reason for public wildlife programs is offered by Dr. Starker Leopold. "A great many people participate in wildlife-oriented recreation, perhaps twenty-five or thirty million directly. Many more derive some vicarious pleasure from wildlife, just knowing, for example, the whooping crane is there. The minority, apparently a very tiny minority, are those who are unable to take any pleasure from wildlife."

The worth of wildlife, say conservationists, can be measured in other ways than simply counting the heads of those who use it. The farmer's-friend approach—hawks eat X million mice who would have eaten X million dollars of agricultural products—is still a factor, though perhaps not as important as it was—or could be if we had done better by the hawks. However, we are tied into the web of life by more strands than those representing hawks and mice. Many scientists, who are anything but sentimentalists, claim that perhaps the most important use of wildlife is as a delicate measure of what we are doing to the environment that we share. "If we are creating an environment that is lethal for, say, a cardinal, then we should be warned, not so much for the cardinal's sake as ours, that bad mistakes are being made someplace," says Dr. Raymond Johnson, research chief of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

"What bearing will our present concern with wildlife have on life in the twenty-first century?" asks Dr. Lewis Batts, the director of a three-million-dollar nature center in Kalamazoo, Mich. He then answers with some impatience, "The hope is that we will learn enough, quickly enough, so that we will be alive in the twenty-first century."

The need for protecting diverse species, rare and endangered ones, often introduces mention of something called the "genetic pool." The loss of a species automatically closes down certain avenues of biological development. The genetic foundation upon which further development might take place is irrevocably destroyed, and the whole of life becomes a little less flexible, adaptable. On a less theoretical level there is always the possibility that the lost species, the lost genes, might have been valuable to us, for medicinal, pharmaceutical, experimental purposes. "We know so little about how we are dependent upon other species, how and when we may need them," says Dr. Stanley Cain, "that it is only prudent that we conserve them."

Wildlife, say others, not only serves as an important measure of our environment but also of our humanity. The whole question of what is right in our dealings with other animals is an emotional one, but it is a principal concern of many people who have become concerned with wildlife. "Why worry about the whooping crane?" asks Dr. E. Raymond Hall, director of the State Biological Survey of Kansas. "Why worry about Eskimos, the ill, or the poor? They are not economic resources. A good reason for saving the whooping crane is that it offers an exercise in morality. We badly need such exercises."

And finally, even more intangibly, there is the aesthetics of wildlife. "Wildlife and wilderness have always had the same social utility as art, music and literature, and should be treasured in the same way, for the same reasons," says Carl Buchheister, president of the National Audubon Society. "This is a frustratingly difficult point of view to explain, but if it is not explained, much of our passionate interest in wildlife is unintelligible."

One of the difficulties in trying to measure the aesthetic importance of wildlife (or anything else) is that we too often try to convert value, a subjective and varying concept, into price and cost, which are objective and fixed. The current budget for the rare-and-endangered-species program is $394,000. Whether we pay the cost of it or not is a matter of public choice. However, the value of it is something else again. The utility of the whooping crane, its value, will not be the same for any two of us. It will depend upon temperament, experience, condition. It is an entirely personal thing, and so therefore it seems to me that it should be the final example of how it is between men and animals.

During the six winter weeks of writing this article about wildlife, I got into the habit of leaving the house in the late afternoon and walking or snowshoeing for an hour or so on the wooded mountain, an Appalachian spur, against which my house is built. The walks led no place in particular; the purpose of them was to release my sedentary, desk-engendered restlessness, clear my head, sort out my thoughts about whooping cranes, condors, ferrets, lions, martens, alligators, biologists, professors, poisoners and bureaucrats that I had seen in the previous six months.

One afternoon there was a heavy snow on the mountain, and because you can go over rougher country on snowshoes than on foot, I climbed a narrow ravine, walking over the top of a laurel thicket covered by the drifts. At the head of the ravine, just below the summit of the mountain, there is an old grove of white pine that has escaped logging for some years. I came to the grove just before sundown. The late sun colored the snow lemon-yellow, and where the pine shadows fell it was purple. Shortly, the crows began to come into the grove to roost, several hundred of them. Winter crow music is common, but it is a fine thing. It is sharp, harsh, bold; to me it is a better song than that of the thrush in the warm, soft, easy summer. When the birds saw me they began to taunt and curse as only crows can. All at once the crows got to me. Like mist burning off, the fog of broken sentences and jumbled quotations and half columns of statistical surveys cleared out of my head.

I thought, for no reason that I can explain, of that family of skunks that had walked out of the cornfield 36 years before and that I have never forgotten. Because I am older, more self-conscious now than then, I thought: *Another thing is happening to me that I will carry with me as I have carried the skunks. I will never escape this scene, this particular moment.*

I thought, because I had been so much involved with him, of John Brereton. "We stood like men ravished at the beautie and delicacie . . ." It is an antique phrase, but suddenly, because of the crows and other things, I had the feeling I knew John Brereton, dead those 350 years, and understood him.

Then I was swallowed up in the very present moment. I was a man standing in the yellow, purple and white snow. Behind me were pines; a half mile below, for as far as I could see, was the great valley of the Appalachians. Above were singing crows. Who I was, where I was, was quite clear.

It is customary in the clichés of nature appreciation to say of such high moments that they are priceless. That is transcendental nonsense. I would pay more, for example, for that experience on the mountain than I would for a ticket to the Super Bowl football game. But if there were only one such crow roost, one such scene, and if it were so far away as to cost a transcontinental airfare to get there, I would not, could not, pay for it. But if the price were beyond me, I would feel I was a very poor man. I would continue to live, but I would be deprived of something that adds irreplaceable quality to my life, gives me immeasurable satisfaction and that is, in ways I do not understand, of great value to me.

The price of having wildlife is finite; it is a matter of what we can or will pay. But the value is infinite. Making all allowances for disparity in tastes, experience, outlook, I do not think I am alone or in a minority in this matter. These feelings have been, are, and I suspect will be, one of the commonest marks of man. That we may be too poor, grow too poor to afford this sort of humanity, to share the land with diverse creatures, is possible, but not, just because it is possible, desirable. □

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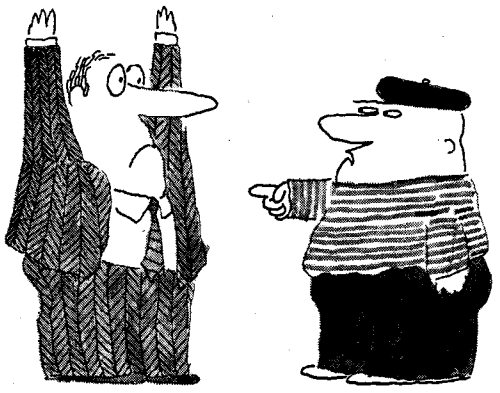
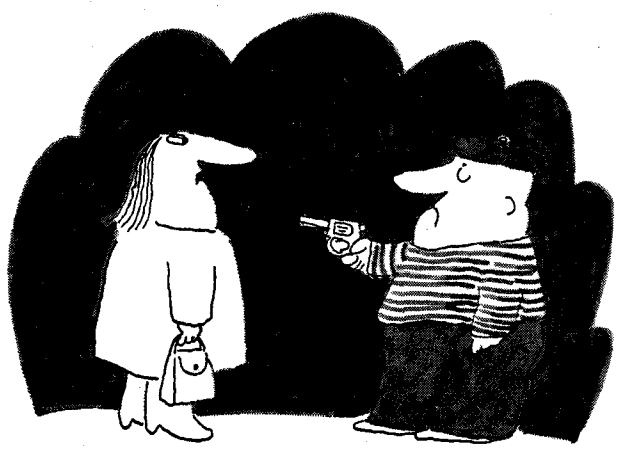
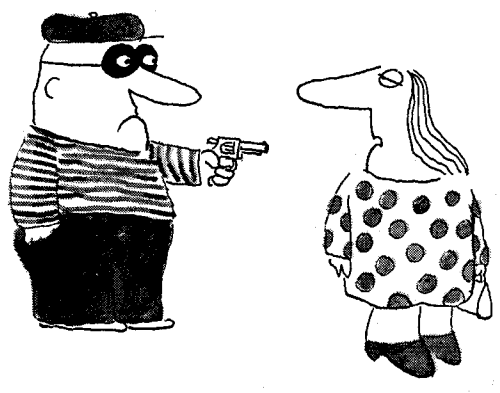
MY KIND OF PEOPLE by Barsotti



"I hate to do this, Mac, but I need to buy a gun."



"Aren't you supposed to have a stocking over your face or something?"



"I'd rather not get involved."

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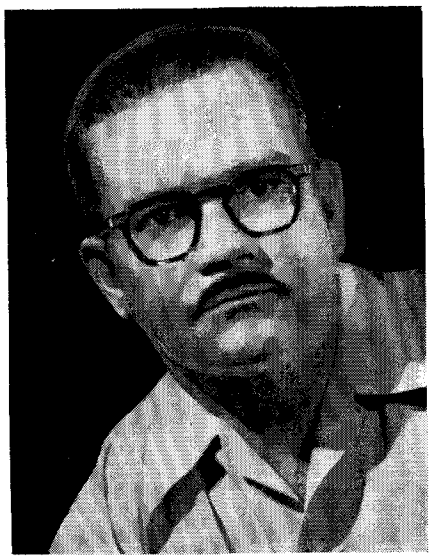

Chicago Man Reveals a Short Cut to Authorship

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DIRTY STORY

By ERIC AMBLER · Part II

Without money, without a ship, without—worst of all—valid passports to allow us a choice, Goutard and I were driven to a hard decision. We signed up to do combat in a land we had never heard of—not for freedom or justice or glory, but only for some little-known minerals that two competing companies were fighting to control.

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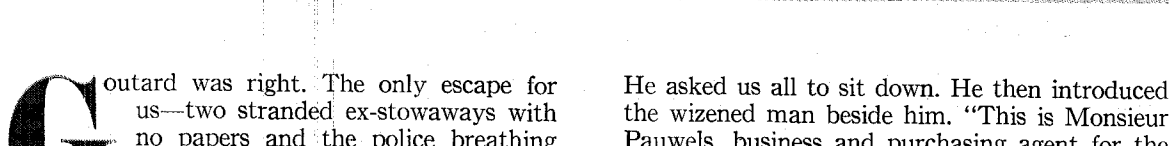

Illustrated by Bernie Fuchs

Goutard was right. The only escape for us—two stranded ex-stowaways with no papers and the police breathing down our necks—was to accept Major Kinck's offer to join his expedition "to secure and protect" a strip of valuable mining land in Equatorial Africa. I didn't know all the details, but I knew I couldn't stay in the Red Sea port of Djibouti much longer. Goutard and I reported to Major Kinck at the offices of a trading company near the Djibouti railway terminal. There were three other "recruits" there.

Kinck was seated behind a table beside a wizened man with a stack of papers in front of him. He asked us all to sit down. He then introduced the wizened man beside him. "This is Monsieur Pauwels, business and purchasing agent for the Société Minière et Metallurgique de l'Afrique Centrale, which is to be your employer. It is understood, and your contracts will stipulate, that you are employed by SMMAC purely and simply as security officers." He then added blandly, "You are in no sense members of a military or paramilitary organization. Correct, Monsieur Pauwels?"

"Quite correct. SMMAC does not employ private armies."

Kinck smiled. "Indeed not. That would be most illegal." Then he went on, "You gentlemen of experience are hard to find. However, other sources have provided enough men to make up an advance party, and our total strength in the area of operations should now be sufficient. But let us get to business. I shall start by identifying each of you to the others." He picked up a typewritten list. "When I read out your names, please raise your hands." He gave the surnames first.

"Barrière, René. Formerly lieutenant in the French Army. Infantry. Active service in Senegal and Upper Volta. Later military-police duty in Dahomey."

Barrière was in his late thirties, a stocky, cold-eyed man with blue jowls and dark hair.

"Goutard, Yves," Kinck went on. "Formerly sergeant-major in French Army. Paratrooper and brigade paratroop instructor. Active service in Indochina and Algeria. Recent experience in transport and security organization. Speaks some Arabic.

"Ruys, Johannes. Formerly sergeant in Netherlands Army. Engineer specializing in explosives and demolition. Active service in Europe and Indonesia. Recent experience in road and bridge construction in South Africa. Fluent German and English, good Swahili."

Ruys was about my age, I think, a big ox of a man with pale eyes. He looked as ill at ease as I felt.

I was next on the list. "Simpson, Arthur Abdel. Formerly lieutenant in British Army. Field intelligence officer. Active service in Egypt and Libya. Long-range desert-patrol work. Fluent English and Arabic."

I sweated.

"Willens, Adrian. Formerly squadron leader in South Africa Air Force. Active service in Burma. Long experience as professional hunter and wild-animal collector in Kenya and Ethiopia. Active service in Mau Mau period. Fluent English, Afrikaans, and Swahili." Kinck looked up before he added waggishly, "French with a horrible accent."

That got a mild laugh. Kinck, of course, was speaking in French, which was the lingua franca of the group.

Willens was in his late forties, lean and thin-lipped. He looked cool, good-humored, and tireless.

Major Kinck put his list down. "You will be meeting your colleagues of the advance party in two or three days. Now, as to pay and allowances, Monsieur Pauwels will explain the procedure."

Monsieur Pauwels did just that, to our general satisfaction. Then Kinck said, "Uniforms will be supplied to you from SMMAC stores. No payment will be involved."

He went on to explain the procedure for getting inoculations at the local hospital. After that, Monsieur Pauwels took over again. "We will proceed to the contracts."

The contract was a two-page document on SMMAC's Geneva head-office letter paper, and three copies had to be signed, one of which was given to the recruit. Then an advance of salary was paid over. The sight of the money was good. When I was handed mine, I did my best to look as if what Kinck had read out about my army record were true. I almost succeeded in convincing myself, except for one thing. Right at the end of the contract there was a place where you had to write in the name and address of your next of kin. As I wrote in my wife Nicki's name, I read the whole paragraph:

> In the event of an officer's death, wounding, or disablement through disease, his next of kin, recorded by him below, shall be immediately informed.

I signed the contract. I took my copy of it, and I took the money. But I didn't feel like a soldier any more—I was feeling sick.

Early on Thursday morning we assembled again with our baggage, at the offices of SMMAC's

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agents. We were given back the passports we had been asked to turn over to them, and I looked through mine immediately. To my surprise I found two new transit visas in it, one for the Sudan and the other for the Republic of Chad.

There was a minibus to take us to the airport. Barrière and Willens had their wives with them, and we were all introduced. The two women got into the bus with us. Naturally, I assumed that they had come to see their husbands off. The idea that they might be coming along too never occurred to me.

After we had been through customs and passport control, we got back into the bus again and were driven around the perimeter to a freight hangar. A scruffy-looking twin-engined plane sat on the tarmac outside. We piled out of the bus and, still carrying our luggage, climbed aboard.

I had realized by then, of course, that the two women were coming along with us, and so was feeling a bit more cheerful. The place we were going to couldn't be too uncivilized, I thought, or they wouldn't be there. That meant that the soldiering part of it, which I had been dreading more than anything else, would probably turn out to be some kind of garrison duty. In that case I probably knew enough to get by. Kinck had said that we were security officers, not a private army. I wanted to believe him.

The interior of the plane was less reassuring than the train of thought I had been so carefully assembling. Most of the space was occupied by a long stack of crates and metal boxes lashed down with wire cables to cleats on the battered metal floor.

"Just dump the bags anywhere and get your seat belts on," Kinck said.

Willens was seated next to me, with his wife Barbara next to him. I heard him say something to her in English: "Vintage World War C-47 with the original bucket seats. I hope these birdmen know what they're doing."

Then the engines were started, and we were on our way.

Sitting crouched on a hard seat with my elbows on my knees, all I had to look at was that section of the cargo immediately facing me. There was lettering visible on some of the boxes. The first word I made out was UZI with a dash and the figure 4 after it. On the next crate to it the letters could only be initials because they were punctuated. They read, F.N.-M.A.G.-7.62. A heavy pressed-metal box interested me most. There were several others like it. The one nearest to me had the word MORTIER stenciled on it, and it had some figures after it and some more letters that I didn't attempt to decipher. MORTIER and the figures were enough. Now all I had to do was to wonder why an advance party of security officers had to be accompanied by 81-mm. mortars.

I noticed that Willens was looking at his watch frequently. He seemed to like what he saw less and less. Finally, he pulled out paper and pencil, made some calculations, and took the results over to Kinck. They had a bellowed mouth-to-ear conversation from which I gathered that if we didn't land soon, we would be out of fuel. Kinck went forward to consult the crew and came back smiling and making signs with his hands to indicate that we would be

America, America

"In the next election I'm voting for myself as a write-in candidate. As a matter of fact I've always voted for myself as a write-in candidate."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

landing in approximately ten minutes.

The place where we landed that day was Juba, a town on the White Nile in South Sudan. The passengers spent the night in the airport rest house. The crew stayed with the plane—to guard the freight, presumably.

That evening, when we were all together finishing dinner, Kinck's authority was challenged for the first time. Willens was evidently still brooding over the length of the flight. "Are we permitted to know tomorrow's flight plan?" he asked.

Kinck smiled. "Certainly. From here we fly to Fort Archambault in Chad."

"Refueling where?"

"Refueling nowhere. We fly direct."

Willens heatedly pointed out that the C-47 was able to carry just enough fuel to cover approximately two thousand kilometers—the distance to Fort Archambault. "We ought to give ourselves some allowance for strong headwinds or navigational errors," he said, and suggested a refueling stop at Yalinga.

Mrs. Willens chipped in. She was Australian and in her thirties, a tall, sexy-looking brunette. "My husband flew four hundred hours piloting C-47's," she said. "He knows what he's talking about."

Kinck smiled at her. "I am sure he does, madame, but if a refueling stop in Yalinga or anywhere else were advisable, we would not be traveling to our destination via Archambault."

"What *is* our destination?" Barrière wanted to know. "Why all the mystery? We'll have to know sooner or later."

"I prefer that you know later. When you *need* to know." He looked coldly at us. "It should not be necessary to explain the need for prudence to security officers, and I must remind you that, in a disciplined force, movement orders are not subject to discussion." He stood up. "We will be making an early start in the morning. I suggest that you all get plenty of sleep. Good night." He bowed to the two women and left.

Nobody made any comment. Ruys produced a flask of whiskey and passed it around. When we had had a drink, we went off to bed.

I was sharing a room with Goutard.

"Well, Arthur," he said as we were undressing, "what do you think?"

"I don't quite know what to think. Willens seems to know what he's talking about."

"Still," Goutard said, "Kinck doesn't strike me as a man who would take unnecessary risks."

"Perhaps he's just being cagey about where we're going," I said.

"What do you mean?"

"Well," I said, "he talked about the *need* to know, and he said he'd prefer we knew where we were going later rather than sooner. Why? Where's the security risk? We're traveling as a group. Who could we talk to except ourselves?"

"Do you mean that we could be overheard talking?"

"Not exactly. We're carrying arms in that plane," I said.

"I know. I'm not blind. Light automatic rifles and machine pistols—hand weapons. What about it?"

"We're carrying mortars, as well," I pointed out. "They're not hand weapons. You can be sure that the security people here as well as customs have inspected them. They will be very interested in their destination. That means that they will be interested in *our* destination, too. We're an armed party. Supposing they decided to question us individually. I'll bet Ruys isn't a very good liar. Well, he doesn't have to be. Neither do we. Since we don't know our destination, we have nothing yet to lie about."

"Then no wonder Kinck's not interested in refueling stops."

"How do you mean?"

"If what you say is correct, Arthur, refueling won't be necessary because we're not really going to Chad, but somewhere nearer. Perhaps we won't even be going in the same direction. Once we're clear of this area, we can change course and go anywhere we like."

"Anywhere Kinck and SMMAC like, you mean."

As I had predicted, the Sudanese airport officials gave us a real going over before they cleared us for Chad.

And, as Goutard had predicted, we did not go to Chad. Twenty minutes after we were airborne Kinck sent round a message he had scribbled on SMMAC paper. It said: "Please note and pass on. Change of flight plan has been made. Detour to Archambault no longer necessary. Therefore now proceeding direct to destination. Approximate flying time 4½ hrs. Further briefing later."

We were given the briefing instead of lunch. Three mimeographed sheets of paper described our destination in some detail.

At this point I may as well make one thing plain. While I am prepared to be completely frank and open about *what* happened, I am not prepared to compromise myself by showing that I know exactly *where* it happened. Our destination is clearly marked on any reasonably up-to-date atlas, but I'm not making any admissions that might be used in evidence against me by unscrupulous persons in official positions. I have changed the place names, not "to protect the innocent" or anything of that sort, but to protect *me*.

This was, more or less, how the "briefing" read:

SOCIÉTÉ MINIÈRE ET METALLURGIQUE
DE L'AFRIQUE CENTRALE
Kawaida Regional Office: Kundi, Republic of Mahindi

Confidential:
Information for the guidance of SMMAC personnel proceeding to Kundi Province, Republic of Mahindi

POLITICAL HISTORY

The Republic of Mahindi was one of the colonies of French Equatorial Africa offered independence by France in 1958. In the subsequent referendum, Mahindi voted for autonomous association within the French community. In 1960 she exercised her option to become completely independent. Her relations with France, however, and with most members of the French community in Africa, continue to be cordial. She is a member of the U.N. A boundary dispute with the

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neighboring Republic of Ugazi is in process of being submitted to the International Court at The Hague.

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into five provinces. The President, who is elected by an Assembly, is currently Monsieur Paul Nyoroka. This is his second term of office. His administration has been termed a "one-party democracy." He is not, however, all-powerful. The authority of the central government outside the capital is exercised through the provincial governors and is by no means uniformly effective. It is weakest perhaps in Kundi Province, where, for reasons which will become apparent, there is a considerable measure of local autonomy.

There was more political guff of this sort, then followed some geographical guff with descriptions of the land and the climate. In Mahindi, it appeared, they had everything from jungle and rain forest to swamps and bush and desert, and everywhere and at all times it was hot.

Then the briefing paper discussed Kundi Province. It was in the northwest corner of Mahindi and was about the size of Belgium. Its western boundary was the Nyoka River, which was also the frontier between Mahindi and the next-door Republic of Ugazi. They slipped in that last bit about the Nyoka River very casually. Then they became all highfalutin.

The Governor of Kundi Province is His Excellency the Emir Othman dan Fuado. The Emir is in some respects a controversial figure. He has been denounced by opponents in central-government circles as a feudal autocrat and despot. In Kundi, where he has no opponents, he is seen as practicing a necessarily firm, but on the whole benevolent, paternalism.

SMMAC's relations with the Emir and the officials appointed by him are extremely cordial. It is intended that they shall remain so. No criticism of the Emir's administration or officials on the part of SMMAC personnel will be tolerated. Offenders will be instantly dismissed.

The major towns in Kundi are FORT GREBANIER, which is also the provincial capital, MATENDO, a river port on the Nyoka, and KAWAIDA, which is the center of our tungsten and cassiterite operations. A light railway managed by SMMAC personnel connects Kawaida with our Matendo facility, where processed ore shipments are transferred to barges.

I noticed that they still hadn't said anything about the rare-earth area we were supposed to guard. I plowed on through the rest of the briefing.

There are fair roads between these towns, that between Fort Grebanier and Matendo being asphalted for much of its 180 kilometers. There is a small airport outside Fort Grebanier and a SMMAC airstrip at Kawaida. Such telephone and telegraph facilities as exist are unreliable. SMMAC employs shortwave radio for most local operational purposes, and routes cables through Ugazi, where the telegraph service is still supervised by European personnel.

The briefing concluded with a merry little piece on the subject of health which began with: '*Among the diseases to be met with . . .*," and ended, after a series of unnerving warnings, with:

WELCOME TO KUNDI

They might have added AND LOTS OF LUCK, JACK.

We landed at Fort Grebanier in the early afternoon. Kinck had said that this was only a short stop for Mahindi passport control. Then we took off again for Kawaida, and that, temporarily, would be the end of our journey, according to Kinck. He still hadn't said anything about our ultimate destination.

When we had landed at Kawaida, the cargo received first priority. We had to climb down the rickety steps and stand about while the cases were unloaded by the plane crew and two men with a truck. They obviously had known in advance what the cargo was and were not surprised to find themselves handling mortars, machine guns, and boxes of ammunition.

When the truck was loaded, we climbed into it and drove off the strip and then up a winding track. The smell of things rotting beneath fungus growths was very strong. Swarms of insects came along with us. After a while we drove through an open gate in a high chain-link fence

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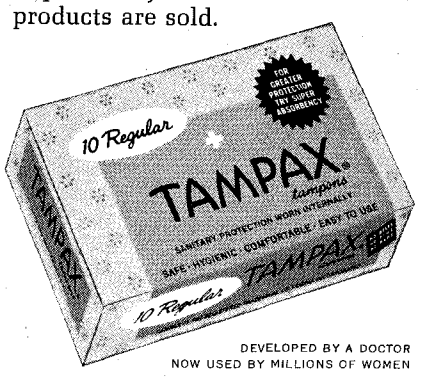

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with lights overhead. When we were through the gate, two black men started shutting the gate behind us.

"The SMMAC compound," Kinck said. "We generate our own electricity."

Now we were among small buildings I had seen from the air.

"These are the houses of our European personnel," Kinck said.

"Is this our base?" Barrière wanted to know.

"No, this is merely our assembly point. But we will talk business later."

Which is just what we did.

After dinner Kinck suggested that, as Madame Barrière and Mrs. Willens were doubtless tired from the journey, they would probably wish to go straight to the guesthouse for transient personnel. In that case he would ask the men to pay a short visit to his office to discuss their plan of work. The two women took the hint.

Kinck's office was in the administration compound, a group of four standard bungalows behind a wire fence. Among the painted metal signs on the door of the fourth bungalow was one which read, SÉCURITÉ—MAJOR KINCK.

Kinck unlocked his office door, switched on the lights, and asked us to sit down. One wall of the office had sheets of plywood fastened to it. On the plywood were pinned plans, aerial photographs, and several maps of the kind surveyors use.

Kinck sat on his desk and looked down at us. "Well, gentlemen," he said, "welcome to Kawaida." Then he gave us a smile. "The time has come when I have to tell you that from now on every one of you must consider himself as, so to speak, under arrest."

He was joking, of course, but nobody there seemed to find it very funny, so he became businesslike. "As security-minded persons," he continued, "you will realize that where important and valuable secrets are concerned there can be no such thing as trust. So, as it now becomes necessary for me to share some secrets with you, I must first ask you to accept some temporary restrictions on your personal freedom. Is that understood?"

We nodded.

"It will be simplest, then, if from now on you consider yourselves as commissioned officers on active service in a theater of war and obliged to observe a code of strict security regulations. Specifically, you will not communicate with civilian personnel here or in the operational areas to which you will be going unless you have specific orders to do so. These restrictions apply also to wives. I may add that for a period of two months from now none of you will be permitted to leave Kundi Province for any reason. Is that all understood?"

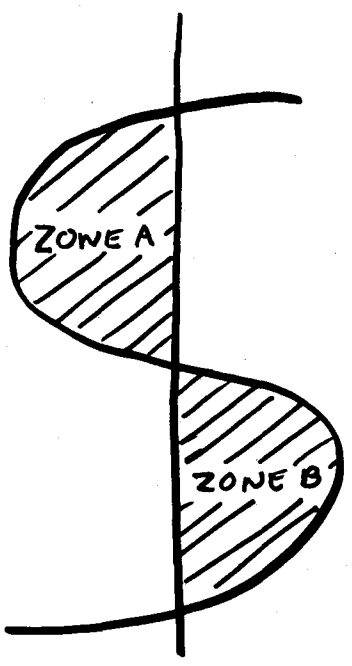
When we had all said "yes," he went on: "Very well, then we can get to work." He picked up a sketch pad and pencil from his desk. "I take it that you have all read carefully the briefing sheets you were given this morning?"

We all nodded.

"I must now tell you that the briefing contains one misstatement of fact. It says there that the western boundary of Kundi Province, the frontier separating us from the Republic of Ugazi, is the Nyoka River. That is only partly true. The word 'Nyoka' means 'snake,' and if you look at the map you will see why the river is called that. Between Kundi and the Ugazi province of Changa it makes two very sharp turns, like this." He drew a large S on the sketch pad and held it up for us to see.

"Now," he went on, "you know something of the history of Ugazi and Mahindi. They were once French colonial possessions. Kundi Province and Changa Province, which now belongs to our neighbors across the river, were once under the same administration, and, for some bureaucratic reason which need not concern us here, a line of longitudinal demarcation rather than the river line was used as the provincial boundary. When Mahindi and Ugazi became independent states, that arbitrary provincial boundary automatically became an international frontier. As a result, the present frontier crosses the Nyoka River at three places, like this. He drew a line straight down through the S so that it became $. "Rather like a dollar sign, isn't it?"

He took his pencil again and shaded the two small D-shaped areas at top-left and bottom-right of the dollar sign. The top one he marked "Zone A," the bottom one "Zone B." He held it up for our inspection again.



"This could be a very expensive dollar sign for Kundi Province," he said, "and I will now tell you why." He put the sketch pad aside.

"Soon after their independence, the governments of Mahindi and Ugazi discussed the possibility of making frontier adjustments. These early discussions were quite friendly. Both sides had already found the old colonial line inconvenient and absurd, and it was generally accepted that, sooner or later, there would be agreement to adopt the river line, the natural frontier, as the political frontier. The territorial losses and gains would, as you can see, be roughly equal for both sides. And there would be gains in stability for both. The riparian and jurisdictional rights of sovereign states separated by so-called 'boundary rivers' are well defined and established in international law. So, negotiations continued, in apparent good faith, until three months ago. Then the Ugazi government's attitude suddenly changed."

He paused to light a cigarette, and went on.

"Ugazi itself is not, so far as is known, particularly rich in mineral resources. However, a year ago an American-West German consortium signed a mineral exploration agreement with the Ugazi government. Under this agreement the consortium, which calls itself the Ugazi Mining and Development Corporation, received the right to explore for and, if found, exploit all nonferrous metallic ores as well as nonmetallic mineral products, excluding oil. The agreement was made on a royalty basis, and, as soon as the Ugazi Assembly confirmed acceptance of it, UMAD moved in three exploration teams. Five months ago one of those teams crossed the Nyoka at the town of Amari, here"—he showed us the sketch pad again and pointed to the top of the dollar sign where the stroke intersected the S—"and moved south into this side of the river which I have called Zone A. One month later the Ugazi government announced that it was dissatisfied with Mahindi's attitude toward their river frontier rectification proposals and was therefore breaking off negotiations."

He looked round at us as if inviting comment. Somebody grunted, and that appeared to satisfy him.

"Obviously the true explanation had to be different. The Emir, who has his heart set on bringing his people in Zone A, and the land itself, back into Kundi where they belong, asked for SMMAC's confidential advice. As a result, we sent an exploration team of our own—secretly, I need hardly say—into Zone A, and ultimately we found what the UMAD team had found. With it we found the explanation of the Ugazi government's sudden strange behavior. On our side of the river, in what is Kundi territory by every moral, ethnic, and geographical standard you care to apply, there is a deposit of a rare earth with an estimated value of well over a hundred million dollars."

He leaned forward, dangling the sketch pad with the dollar sign under our noses. "SMMAC owns the mineral concessions in Kundi. I think you will see, gentlemen, why it is necessary that we erase that stroke from the S, and do so quickly and permanently."

He slapped the sketch pad down, got up from the desk, and walked round to sit behind it.

"What do we use to erase it with?" asked Willens.

"I will come to that. But first the strategic position. The Mahindi government and the Emir have acted and are acting in accordance with our advice. Our advice has been that under no circumstances should the Ugazis be given cause to suspect that we know the real reason for their change of attitude toward the frontier rectification proposals. We do not want them putting troops into Zone A or reinforcing the police they have there already. So far they have done neither. Obviously, they do not want to draw attention to Zone A any more than we do at the moment. Second, we advised the government here to take steps to establish its legal claim to the area by formal action at the United Nations and by requesting a hearing of the case by the International Court. They have also offered to submit the dispute to international arbitration. So far this show of good faith has met with no response from Ugazi, whose present policy seems to be to pretend not to hear. Third, we recommended that forces from Kundi provided by the Emir should prepare discreetly to move into Zone A and oc-

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cupy it in sufficient strength to hold it against any attempts at counterattack from across the river. That, gentlemen, is where you come in."

It was where I would have liked to leave. I blurted out the question before I could stop myself:

"As security guards, do you mean?"

He gave me a droll glance. "Before an area can be guarded, obviously it has to be secured."

Suddenly everybody was asking questions.

"How big is Zone A?"

"What sort of terrain is it?"

"Are there any roads?"

"What forces are maintained there?"

"Are the Emir's men trained soldiers?"

"What happens to Zone B?"

He held up a hand. "All in good time, gentlemen. Everything has been carefully thought out. But I will deal with the question about Zone B first. As I said, we intend to occupy Zone A, which is on this side of the river. However, *simultaneously* we shall withdraw completely from Zone B, which is on the Ugazi side and is of no value to us. Once we have withdrawn the Mahindi police, border guards, and customs officials from Zone B, the whole operation will have simply put into effect the territorial exchange originally proposed and in principle accepted. Our international legal position will be further strengthened by this move, which would clearly be very difficult to reverse."

He waited until he was sure he had us in hand again before continuing.

"Now for your other questions. Maps of Zone A have been prepared and will be available when they are needed. For security reasons we are not issuing them until that time. All you need to know at the moment about Zone A is that it is bounded on the west by approximately eighty kilometers of river line and on the east by the colonial frontier running between the river town of Amari in the north and the frontier post near Matendo in the south. That distance is fifty-five kilometers." He pointed to the sketch map. "The shape is almost exactly as I have drawn it here, semicircular. What sort of country is it? Flat near the river, hilly and difficult elsewhere. Near Amari there are a number of small cocoa plantations. Amari itself is a sizable town, and the Ugazis have made an administrative center of it. There are villages strung out along the principal road, which in most places follows the curve of the river. Lesser roads connect the frontier patrol posts outside Matendo, both ours and the Ugazis'. These were set up in an effort to discourage smuggling. The interior of Zone A is largely uninhabited."

"Where is this rare-earth deposit?" asked Willens.

"That we do not need to go into," Kinck replied firmly. "In fact, it will be better if no further references are made to that subject for the time being. By securing Zone A, we secure everything in it. No more need be said. Let us concentrate at present on the military aspects of our task. I mentioned the Emir's forces. These consist, as far as we are concerned, of an infantry battalion armed with old Mannlicher-Berthier rifles. The battalion has until recently been deployed by companies and platoons on what were essentially police duties. It is now in process of being concentrated in a staging area within striking distance of Zone A. These troops are only part-trained. They know how to load and fire their rifles, though standards of marksmanship are not high. They can use their bayonets. Firmly disciplined under the leadership of experienced European officers, they make good fighting men."

"What about the enemy forces?" asked Barrière.

"There is not much to be said about the opposition. The strength of the Ugazi garrison in Zone A is estimated at two companies, concentrated mainly in the Amari area. Most of these men, however, are normally employed on police duties and at least half of them are armed only with police clubs."

"How well are they likely to fight?" Goutard asked.

"If our own moves are swift and properly coordinated, they may be too surprised to fight at all. Ideally, the coup should end, on the day it begins, with the surrender and disarming of the Ugazi garrison."

"While we get ready for the countercoup," Barrière remarked.

"If it comes. The river is two kilometers wide at Amari."

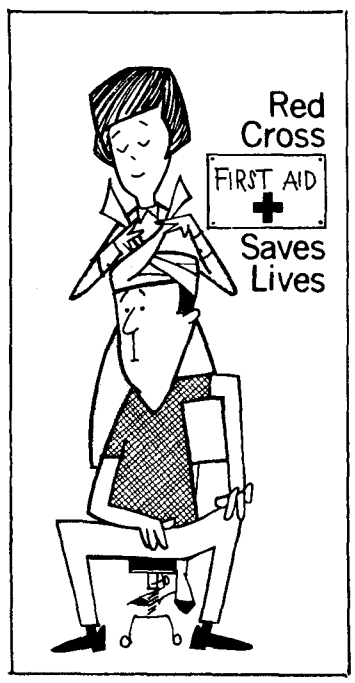
"But they don't have to counterattack at Amari, Major. They have eighty kilometers of river to choose from. True, we will be on interior lines, but eighty kilometers is a lot of front to hold with one battalion of half-trained infantry. What about transport? How mobile will we be?"

"There will be trucks available for at least two companies to start with, plus a reconnaissance force. Other transport will be commandeered. Don't forget that we expect to have a friendly local population to deal with."

"There should be river patrols," said Ruys, "boats with heavy machine guns to intercept attempted crossings."

"That too has been allowed for in the plan. We expect that after the evacuation of Zone B is completed, launches and ferryboats will become available for arming as you suggest. However, no final decision on that has yet been made. We must consider the possibility of reprisals against our river traffic south of Matendo. Our defense against counterattack must remain flexible."

It was almost a relief to hear that the arrangements for this charming little smash-and-grab raid were not absolutely cut and dried. Somehow that made it seem less outrageous. My



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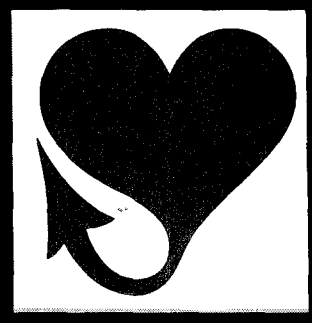

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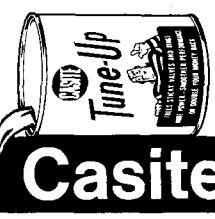

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"brother officers" seemed to be actually *looking forward* to it. They weren't thinking that they might get killed or injured; they weren't wondering how the hell to get out of it. I was. Then I heard my name and looked up. Kinck was asking each of us in turn if we had any questions, and had come to me.

"Only the obvious question, Major," I said. "When is D-day?"

"I thought I had answered that," he replied irritably. "We expect the Emir's forces to be up to strength within two weeks. The date for the operation will be decided then."

Back in our room, after the briefing was over, Ruys raised a question that was on my own mind.

"I wonder," he said to Goutard and me, "what this American–West German consortium would give to know what we know."

"Careful, careful!" Goutard warned playfully. "That sort of talk could be dangerous."

"Kinck is no fool," Ruys said. "He knows we would think of it. He must be very sure that he has us by the hair." He shrugged and got into bed.

It was a long time before I got to sleep. Ruys had disconcerted me, but he was right about one thing: Every man there must have thought about the value of what we knew to the UMAD consortium in Ugazi. Kinck indeed had us by the hair, and the only contacts we would have with Ugazi, as far as I could see, would be those he had prescribed. Selling out to UMAD was a nice idea—there was a fortune to be had if you could play your cards right. What you needed was a safe escape route and the nerve to use it. I was all too well aware that I didn't have either.

Next morning we shaped up in the SMMAC supply room and were issued our uniforms—khaki drill slacks and bush shirts. There were no badges of rank or insignia of any kind on the shirts. The caps were also of drill, with wide, floppy brims. None of it looked very soldierly to me, but it was as comfortable as any clothing could be in that heat. Then Kinck gave us each a round, enameled-metal badge. The enameling was in the Mahindi national colors and portrayed the flag of the republic.

"That badge, when worn on the right breast," Kinck told us, "identifies you as an officer in the Mahindi armed forces and senior to any police or other local official. It should under no circumstances be worn or displayed here in Kawaida. It is for use solely in the staging and operational areas."

We left early the following morning for the staging area wearing our uniforms. For several kilometers outside the SMMAC compound the road was tolerable. Then it forked, and we turned toward the railway and almost immediately crossed it. From then on, the road deteriorated rapidly. It was really nothing more than a dark tunnel through the jungle. When we emerged from it, we were in a large clearing on the floor of a valley, and there was the railway again. It was a single-track line for most of its length, and this was the place where the empty ore trucks returning from Matendo were shunted around the full ones coming down from Kawaida. Alongside the short stretch of double track there was a siding, a maintenance shed, a concrete house, and some thatched huts.

As we drove up, a bearded white man in uniform with the officer badge on his shirt came out of the house. He gave Kinck a casual salute that was more like a wave of greeting, and climbed into a Jeep. When he drove off, our truck followed him.

We went down a steep track that led away from the railway. About four hundred meters away there was another clearing, where a scowling sentry was posted. We stopped on the edge of the clearing by some flat-topped trees. Under them, in the shade, were some huts and two or three store tents.

Goutard took out his officer's badge and pinned it on his shirt. The others were doing the same. We had obviously arrived at the staging area. I got my badge out, too. A moment later I was an officer in the army of the Republic of Mahindi.

In the next few days I learned a lot. To begin with, I found out what UZI meant. The Uzi is a submachine gun designed and manufactured in Israel. With the metal butt folded, it is 18 inches long. With a loaded 25-round magazine attached, it weighs 9 pounds, and it fires 9-mm. Parabellum bullets. It is a chubby little brute with a hunched, arrogant look about it. I never liked handling mine even when it was unloaded. "*The soldier has four best friends*," my father used to say; "*his two feet, his rifle, and, if he plays his cards right, the orderly-room clerk.*" I suppose I didn't have my Uzi long enough to look upon it as a best friend.

I was grateful to it, though, at the start. It enabled me to conceal my total ignorance of submachine guns. The Uzi is a post-World War II weapon. Kinck, Goutard, and Captain Troppmann, the officer with the beard, who was Kinck's second-in-command, were the only ones there who had seen a Uzi before, so all the rest of us had to be shown how it worked.

Nobody had a revolver or pistol. I was surprised at this and thought of asking about it, but luckily, Ruys got in first and was badly snubbed by Captain Troppmann. Troppmann came from Alsace, as Kinck did, and had a very sharp, sardonic manner. For the professional soldier, he said, pistols and revolvers had always been fairly useless and now were obsolete. With the Uzi you didn't have to be a good shot; if you wanted to kill, you killed—at up to two hundred meters if you had time to aim and remembered to flip over the back sight—and you could kill without thinking. Then he got quite steamed up. Pistols and revolvers, he said, were not for soldiers, but for policemen and crooks, and film actors. Highly educational it was.

Captain Troppmann's wife was with us now. She was Eurasian, quite attractive and spoke very good French, but she was inclined to be bossy. Barbara Willens didn't get on at all well with her. The women had naturally taken charge of the temporary mess arrangements for the European officers, and Madame Troppmann—as the "senior" wife, presumably—took it on herself to give the other wives orders. There were other sources of friction among the married couples, but I took no sides. All I wanted was to get out of that camp—but I didn't at all want what would come next. I had found out what would be expected of me.

Goutard and the others had soon discovered that the Emir's "battalion" had a strength of less than four hundred men, whose musketry training in most cases had not progressed much beyond the stage of loading and firing. They had had little or no target practice. They were, however, all dangerously trigger-happy. As Willens remarked sourly, they constituted a menace to everyone except an enemy.

Kinck brushed aside the criticism. We were all sitting around the table in the mess tent on the morning of the second day. He went on to explain the mechanics of the expedition.

"The ostensible purpose of our concentration here," he said, "is to protect the railway against attempts at sabotage. Needless to say, there have been no such attempts, but our tactical training exercises have been in the form of double envelopments using the railway as an axis. Later, of course, our axis will be the river road to Amari."

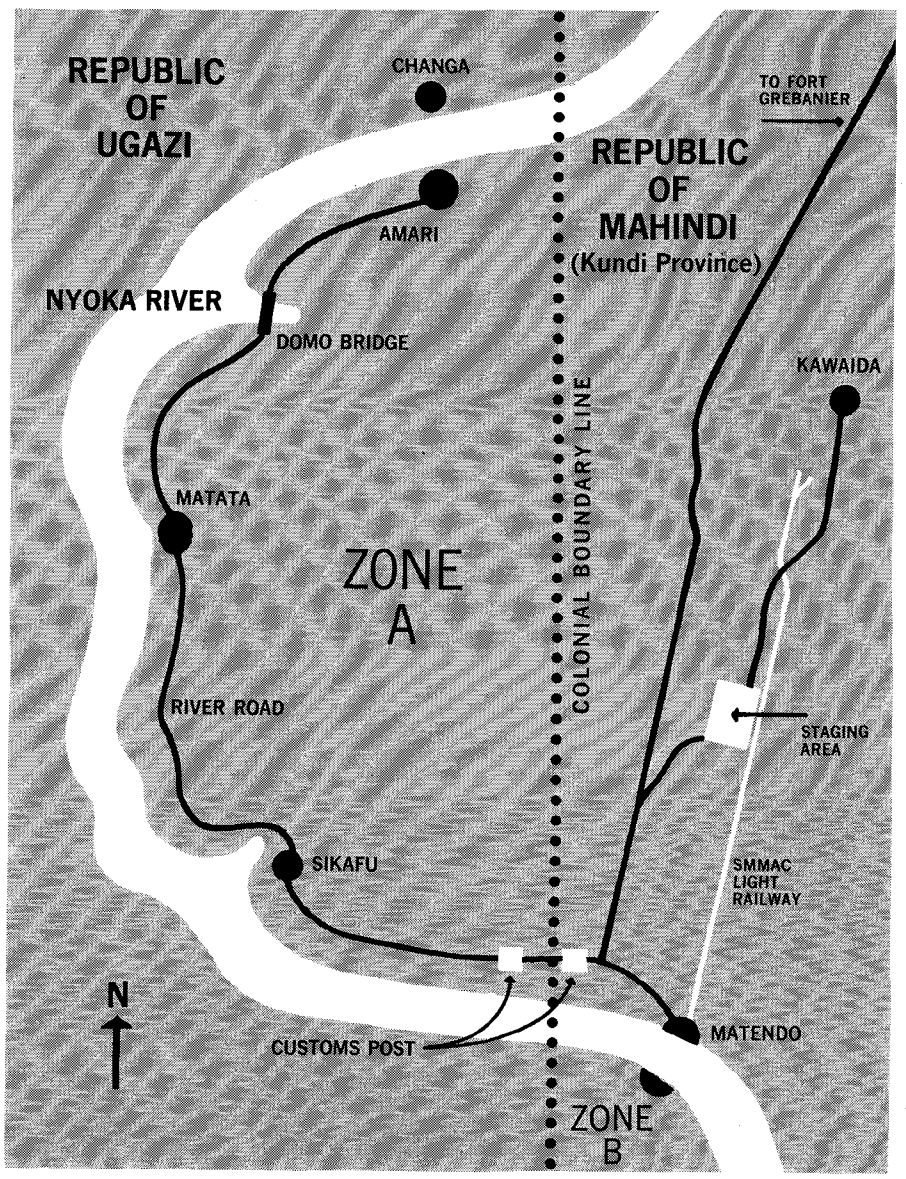
He motioned to Troppmann, who proceeded to distribute copies of the secret map of Zone A that had been so hush-hush at Kawaida.

For security reasons, my own security that is, the map here reproduced is not an exact copy of the one Troppmann distributed; but if I am to make people understand the mess I was in and the really appalling dangers I had to face, some sort of map is necessary.

"We shall cross the frontier just west of Matendo," Kinck announced. "There is a Ugazi roadblock and customs post there, but it is lightly held and you should have no difficulty with it. From there you will push on swiftly along the river road. Points where resistance is encountered which cannot be promptly overcome will be bypassed by the reconnaissance groups and left to be dealt with by the main body. Speed is essential. We must use our advantage of surprise. We cannot allow Amari to be reinforced from across the river. If we cannot seize the town itself on the first day, we must at least surround it effectively. The reconnaissance groups must be prepared to cut their way through quickly and ruthlessly." He sounded as if he had an armored division at his disposal.

"Some of you have already had your duties assigned to you. Those who joined earlier have naturally had time to establish rapport with the native officers and N.C.O.'s under their command, and company training has been proceeding satisfactorily. By next week companies should be up to strength. I have the Emir's positive assurance of that. However, there remains the matter of the spearhead reconnaissance groups. They must now begin their independent training. There will be two groups, and the companies will have to supply thirty men for each. The groups will also need two N.C.O.'s apiece. Captain Troppmann will select those, in consultation with company commanders. The group commanders will be as follows: Group One, Barrière with Ruys as second-in-command. Group Two, Goutard with Willens as second-in-command. The spearhead force as a whole—that is, both groups—will be commanded by Captain Troppmann. Under him, responsible for communications and liaison, will be Simpson."

I wasn't too worried at first. Communications and liaison didn't sound particularly dangerous. I saw myself



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sitting by a field telephone, passing on orders and sticking pins in a map. Then Kinck began to go into details.

Each group, he said, would have two trucks, three machine guns, and two mortars. The officers would also have Uzis. "Each group," he went on, "will have shortwave, fixed-frequency radio transceivers with a range of up to seven kilometers line of sight. As most of the river road lies across flat country, it should not be difficult to keep in touch with one another."

"How do we keep in touch with the main body?" Willens asked.

"Via Simpson. The spearhead command truck will have equipment of the necessary power. In fact, it may be as well for us to begin using our radio code names now so as to get accustomed to them." He glanced down at his notes. "Captain Troppmann and Simpson will be Spearhead; Group One—Barrière and Ruys—will be Hammer; Group Two—Goutard and Willens—will be Anvil. As force commander and leader of the main body, I will be Armorer." He looked at Troppmann. "Is there anything else?"

Troppmann shook his head and got to his feet. "No, that is everything. Let's get to work."

He took us first, crammed into his Jeep, to the transport park off the road below the camp. It was under heavy guard. In command there was Sergeant Musa, a huge, jet-black man wearing a brassard to show his rank. We were each identified to him and he was told which trucks were now in our charge. We inspected the trucks. The four group trucks were three-tonners with slatted sides. The "command" truck was smaller. It had a canvas top with roll-up sides, and a wide box had been built immediately behind the cab. This, Troppmann explained, had been put in to house the intermediate-range radio equipment and its motor generator. Sticking out from the passenger side of the cab was a heavy steel bracket which also looked like a recent addition. Troppmann seemed surprised when I asked what it was for.

"That's where you mount the M.A.G., of course. The Uzi is a handy little arm, but we need a gun like the M.A.G. that can hit at a distance too."

We returned to the camp and went to the main store tent. There we were shown the radio equipment we would have to use—mostly walkie-talkies, plus the intermediate-range transceiver that would go in the back of the command truck.

Troppmann was showing me how the transceiver worked when Willens wandered over and began to ask questions about it. How many frequencies could it handle? What were they? Which one would we be using? Troppmann answered Willens civilly enough; but later, while the M.A.G.'s were being uncrated, he took me aside.

"One thing I wish to impress on you, Simpson," he said. "Nobody is to have access to that intermediate-range equipment except Major Kinck, myself, and, when we become operational, you. That is an order. Do you understand?"

"I understand," I said, and I did, too. Anyone who knew how to operate that set could make nonsense of Kinck's security blackout if he wanted to—and if he knew whom to contact. But I didn't give it serious thought. I had too many other things on my mind, including, at that moment, the machine gun that Goutard was lovingly lifting out of its box.

The M.A.G. is a Belgian gun designed for the standard NATO cartridge and 7.62-mm. bullet. By adjusting the gas regulator, you can boost its rate to fire to as much as a thousand rounds a minute. It is link-belt fed. With the M.A.G. you can kill or wound people a thousand yards away with no trouble at all.

Goutard and Barrière were like children, snapping and clacking the mechanism, showing off for one another. But I paid no attention to them; I was trying to think of a way out of the mess I was in.

In our hut that night, I tried to find out from Goutard how he estimated our chances. If he, with his military experience, really believed that we were going to be able to bull our way across the frontier and drive to Amari without getting hurt and without having to do anything more strenuous than accept a surrender when we got there, I wouldn't have much to worry about.

"Well, Spearhead," he said—he had taken to calling me Spearhead, which irritated me—"you're the intelligence officer. You tell *me* something. How good is Kinck's information about the Ugazi forces in Amari?"

"Since he bases his whole plan on it, he must believe that it is good."

"How up-to-date is it?"

"I don't know."

"Well, there you are. His plan relies on there being no change of strength in Amari. If there is no change, then it's easy. We could do it with a quarter the force we have. What I don't like is this waiting. We won't train these *macaques* in two weeks. If we're going to be unopposed, we might as well forget the main body, load the trucks tomorrow, start driving, and get the job over with. By waiting until the main body's up to strength, we merely give the enemy more time to find out about us accidentally, more time for him to change his mind about reinforcing Amari. Every day we wait increases our chances of having an opposition to deal with, without increasing our ability to deal with it."

"Kinck must realize that."

"He probably does. I'd say he can't do anything about it. He's got to wait until we're up to strength. SMMAC may be paying him, and us, but it's this Emir who is in command. It's his operation, not ours—and that's the way it's got to look to the outside world. SMMAC has to keep its hands clean. I'll make a bet with you, Spearhead. We, the whites, may take Amari—for all practical purposes, I mean—but it'll be the blacks under their own officers who'll occupy it."

I lay awake for a long time that night, trying to decide which is worse when you're dreading the future: to know too little or to know too much.

We had been in the staging area a week when Troppmann announced that we would reconnoiter our first obstacle, the Ugazi roadblock and frontier post on the river road west of Matendo. Barrière, Ruys, Goutard, and Willens came with us in the command truck. Troppmann told me to drive.

We didn't want to cause alarm by going right up to the frontier post. Instead, we stopped just short of the intersection between the Matendo road and the Mahindi side of the river road and climbed up the hillside to a spot where it leveled off and we could stand. In the distance, we could see the Nyoka River.

The Mahindi post was about half a mile from us, with the Ugazi post a hundred yards beyond. They looked practically identical except for the color of the barriers.

Troppmann passed around a pair of binoculars. The Ugazi roadblock was made up of earth-filled oil drums painted white and placed so that a vehicle had to slow and make two sharp turns in order to get through. In the middle of the block was a counterbalanced red-and-white-striped barrier which could be raised and lowered by hand. The need to make those sharp turns on the approach to the barrier made it impossible to crash it at speed from either direction. If Spearhead wanted to get through intact, it would have to gain control of the post first.

This was a whitewashed concrete-block building with two phone-line insulators on one corner of the roof. A khaki-uniformed Ugazi soldier squatted in the shade of what I now knew to be a cassia tree. A rifle was propped against the tree beside him.

"The telephone line connects this post with two of their frontier patrol posts," said Troppmann. "We shall ignore those, of course, when we go in—they cannot interfere with us—but the second post can communicate with Amari. It is important, therefore, that before taking this post we deal with their telephone. If we can do this without firing I would prefer it. If *we* start firing, *they* will start firing. We don't want any casualties on either side if we can avoid it.

"Our plan is," he went on, "that during the night before the operation begins, the Mahindi post should be evacuated by our regular customs personnel and border guards, and that we should take over. The frontier is closed at night. At dawn, Spearhead and Hammer should move their trucks, with fully armed troops aboard, up to the roadblock and then stop as if they expected to make a conventional border crossing. The Ugazis, of course, seeing the troops, will refuse to let the trucks pass. But there will be arguments, protests, and confusion involving, we hope, all the Ugazi post personnel. Under cover of this disturbance, and moving quietly on foot, Anvil will surround the post, cut the telephone wires, and take up covering positions. The post can then be invited to surrender. I would be surprised if they refused the invitation."

Only Barrière had any criticism to offer. "Don't they mount a guard at night?" he asked.

"He will certainly be asleep," Troppmann said.

Barrière persisted. "But the two posts are only a hundred meters away. With three trucks arriving and all that unusual activity and monkey chatter going on, he's likely to wake up and wonder what's happening. He could alert the post."

"What is your suggestion?"

"That only one group take over the Mahindi post—Hammer or Anvil—and let Spearhead and the second group arrive together at dawn to create the

"Imbecile! I said 'fresh coat'—not frescoes!"

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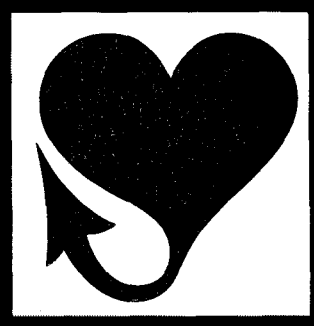

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diversion. Then it doesn't matter how much noise there is."

"Yes, that is reasonable. Any other points?" Troppmann asked.

"What do we do with them when they've surrendered?" asked Ruys.

"Leave them for the main body to deal with. They will be close behind us at the start, remember."

It all sounded so easy, so foolproof.

Kinck was away from the camp for the next two days. Rumor said that he had gone to Fort Grebanier for a meeting with the Emir, whose promise to reinforce the main body had still not been kept. He returned on Wednesday with further supplies of mortar ammunition, a case of brandy, and new orders. The orders were that we should not wait for further reinforcement of the main body, but proceed immediately with the operation.

The brandy was welcome. By ten o'clock everyone was reasonably merry, except Adrian Willens. He was pretending to be drunk. I don't think anyone else spotted the pretense. I had seen him drinking before—his face and smile would seem a bit thinner when he'd drunk a lot and his tongue would get a bit sharper and shrewder, but that was all. I would have said that he could have drunk anyone there under the table. Yet there he was that evening with a slack grin on his face and nodding idiotically while one of the company officers told him a long, boring story. I was pretty sure then he was pretending. When, a little later, he got to his feet, swayed, and then, with a muttered apology, staggered out of the tent, I was almost certain. I saw Kinck purse his lips, and I caught Barbara Willens's eye. She shrugged slightly.

"My husband's a little out of practice," she said in English. "All he needs is a little air." She started to follow him, but paused a minute beside me. "It seems silly to go on calling you Mr. Simpson. It's Arthur, isn't it?"

"Yes, Mrs. Willens."

"Barbara's my name." She sighed. "I suppose I'd better see what that husband of mine is up to. Do you mind walking across to our hut with me, Arthur?"

"Of course not." Their hut was on the other side of our section of the camp, and in that place walking anywhere after dark could be nerve-racking. But we were, after all, in the European section, and *macaques* were posted. I was puzzled, I wasn't fool enough to think that with her husband in the offing she had any hanky-panky in mind; she'd have picked on Goutard for that.

As we left the mess tent I glanced at her strolling along beside me and could just make out the outline of her face. She was looking straight ahead.

"Adrian isn't really drunk, you know," she said.

"I didn't think he was. I did think that he might be pretending to be."

"That was very sharp of you. Adrian said that you were sharp."

"Not sharp enough to guess why he should pretend, though."

"He's pretending so that you and I can have this talk, alone, without everyone wondering what's going on. They're thinking now that you're just being a helpful gentleman."

"And I'm not?"

"You could be, Arthur. Helpful to yourself, too. Adrian has a business proposition to put to you."

"That sounds interesting, Mrs. Willens, and I'm listening very carefully, but if your husband has a business proposition to put to me, why isn't he putting it?"

"That's a safety precaution, Arthur. I'm going to explain how it works first, so that you will know where you stand."

I slowed down as we reached their hut.

"It's all right," she said. "Adrian will stay away until he sees you go back to the mess. We can make ourselves comfortable."

They had two folding canvas stools, and we sat down by the hut entrance. She lighted a cigarette.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"When will they know if 'escalation' doesn't work?"

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"I am going to tell you a secret, and you're going to have to keep it. If you don't—if it shocks you so much that you feel that you have to go running to Major Kinck and tell him the terrible thing I've told you—you're going to look a bloody fool because I'm going to say that you made the story up out of spite and to cover yourself."

"Against what?"

"My husband was drunk and missing. You offered to help me find him. Instead, you made a pass at me. I fought you off and said I would complain to Major Kinck. I didn't. I decided to forgive and forget. But you decided to protect yourself and assuage your wounded pride at the same time. That's why we're here alone, Arthur, so that, if you *do* feel like talking out of school, it'll just be your word against mine. Which of us do you think would be believed?"

"You've made your point, Mrs. Willens. I think it might be better if you don't tell me this secret of yours." I got to my feet. "I'll be safer that way."

She didn't move. "Who wants to be safer? What I'm going to tell you can make you richer."

Now I didn't quite know what to do. She smiled at me. "Aren't you even curious, Arthur?"

"All right, Mrs. Willens," I said. "What's the secret?"

She dropped her voice before she answered. "Adrian has an old friend in Amari who works for the Ugazi Mining and Development Company—UMAD. We ran into him when we were in Entebbe six weeks ago. He's South African, a geologist. I'll call him Bill. Adrian knew him from the war. Bill was in Entebbe to pick up an air delivery of some special scientific equipment that had been flown out from West Germany. He spent the evening with us, and we all had a few drinks. He talked a bit. He used the phrase 'rare earth' a couple of times. And he gave Adrian his address in Amari."

"Has your husband been in touch with him since?"

"Yes, he has. That's what I'm coming to. We went to Djibouti to look into a job offer for Adrian. When that fell through, we were left high and dry. We were getting a bit worried, when Kinck approached Adrian. Adrian's a cautious one. He wired to Bill in Amari, outlining the proposition and asking for his opinion. He got a reply the day before we left Djibouti. It was very interesting. Bill knew all about SMMAC, of course. It's a big concern with operations in several of these new countries, and he said they were good for the money. But what Bill wanted to know was *where* the job was. That was very important, he said. And if the job was in Mahindi, Bill said that Adrian must be sure to keep in touch with him. You see what that meant?"

"Yes. He smelt a rat. *Has* your husband been in touch with him again?"

"That's a bloody silly question. How could he have been? That's where you come in." She paused dramatically. "Do you care much who owns this patch of rare earth, Arthur?"

"SMMAC pays me."

"UMAD would pay you more."

"SMMAC is here, UMAD is there."

"Didn't you hear me say that Adrian and Bill were in the air force together?"

"You're thinking of the radio, I suppose."

"Bill said that in the field UMAD used the two-twenty megacycle band. Adrian says that you have access to that frequency."

"The set may have access to it, Mrs. Willens, but I don't have free access to the set. They're being very careful."

"But you *will* have access to it."

"When we become operational, yes."

"That's what I mean. Now, Adrian has a signal he wants to send. When he approaches you, will you listen to him?"

"I'll listen, but I can't see ——"

She silenced me abruptly. "Arthur, until you've listened, of course you can't see. Just remember two things. If SMMAC wins, you'll be paid off when your three months are up and that'll be the end of it. Just another white mercenary looking for a job. If UMAD wins, and you are one of those who made the win possible, you could be sitting pretty. Think about it?"

"All right, I'll think, Mrs. Willens." That at least was a promise I would keep.

"Then you'd better go back now. Good night, Arthur."

"Good night, Mrs. Willens."

Goutard looked at me curiously when I returned to our hut that night.

"You were gone a long time. Was Willens there?"

"No. We were talking about Australia."

"Is that all? You're losing your touch, Spearhead."

I was tired, I had a lot on my mind, and I snapped at him. "Don't call me Spearhead."

His eyes raked me over maliciously. "Getting nervous already, my friend?"

"It isn't that," I said instinctively.

"Then it must be something else. Something I don't know about?"

"No," I said, but he kept at me.

"Tell me," he said. "What did you really talk about to the Willenses?"

"It was Mrs. Willens. I told you. He wasn't there."

"Go on. We don't have secrets, Arthur. I've told you that before."

So I told him the big secret. It was a relief, in a way. As he listened, his usual grin came back.

"And you weren't going to tell *me* that?" he asked when I'd done.

"Until I know what Willens has in mind, there's nothing much to tell."

"You call that nothing much?"

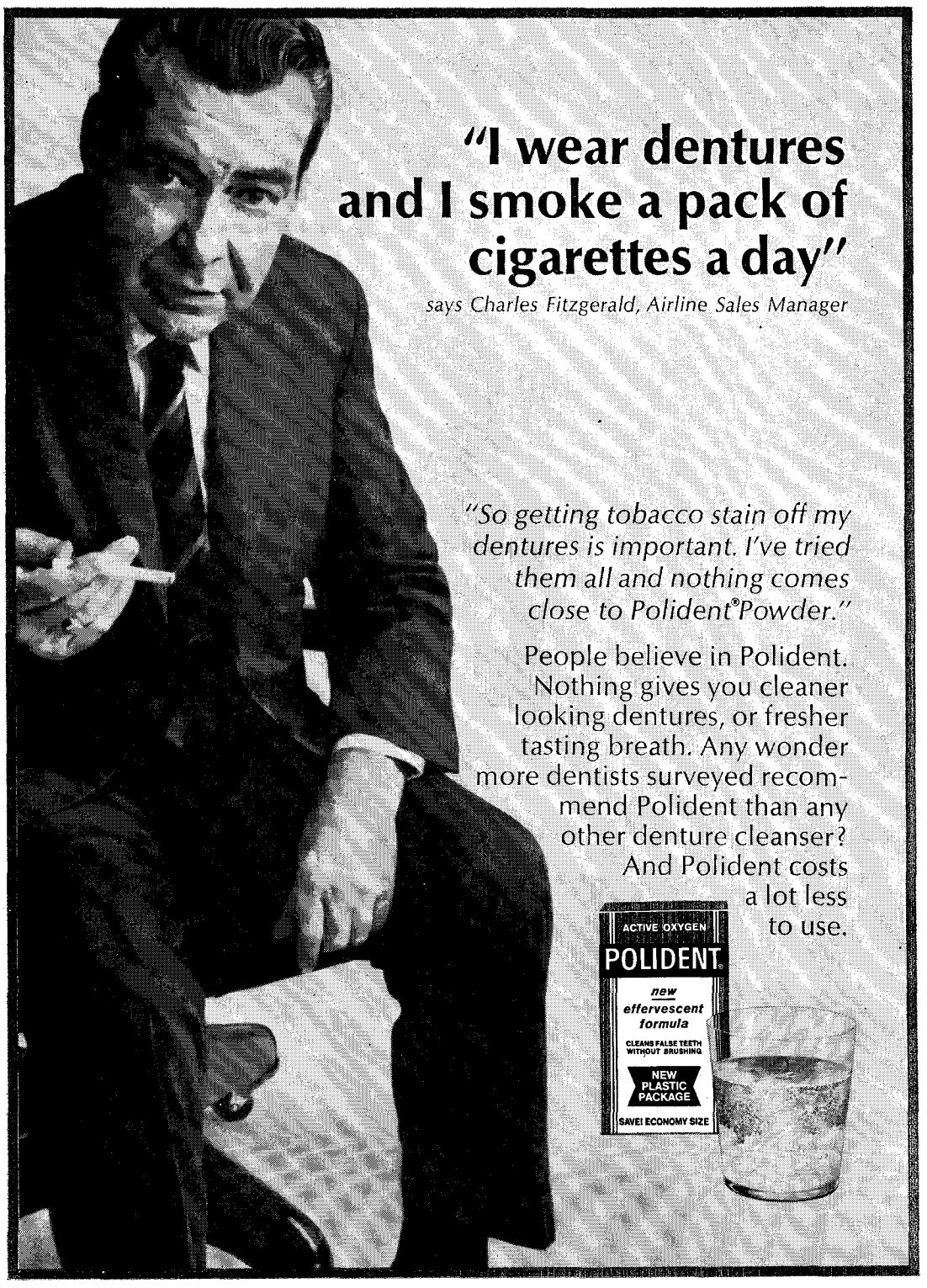
I shrugged. "It makes no sense to me at the moment. Are you going to Kinck? Mrs. Willens will only say I made the whole thing up."

"Why should I go to Kinck? Willens is no fool. I should know. He's my second-in-command. If he's thought of a way of selling out to these UMAD people without risking his own skin, I want to know what it is. If it'll work, we may as well share in the profits."

"What profits?" I demanded. "How can it work? If he warns this friend of his in time, the Ugazis will be ready for us. They'll put more troops into Amari immediately. If we're still silly enough to try anything, they'll stop us. There may be casualties, but there'll be no coup. So UMAD wins and SMMAC loses. What happens then? Willens gets paid off with the rest of us and goes to Amari to contact his friend. What does the friend say? I can guess. 'Thanks very much, old boy, I'm very grateful to you. UMAD is grateful, too. The boss told me to buy you a drink. What'll it be?' End of story. You can't sell information *after* you've given it, when it's public property. That sort of deal has to be made in advance, and you have to know whom you're dealing with."

He thought about that for a moment, then nodded. "I suppose you're right. Then what's he up to?"

"I'll know better after he's told me about the signal he wants sent, but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I'll tell you what I think. I think that Mrs. Willens told me some of the truth, but I think most of it was half-truth. This old air-force pal of Willens, for instance. He doesn't make sense, the way she told it. He may be a geologist, but I don't think he was in Entebbe picking up an air shipment of scientific instruments. That was said to make him sound small fry. I'll bet he's someone high up in UMAD."

"How do you make that out?"

"Mrs. Willens says that her husband was able to make a deal with the friend from Djibouti by telegram. Could he do that with a geologist who, when he's not working in the field, is used as an errand boy? It makes no sense. There's only one explanation. Willens is under contract to UMAD."

"As a spy, you mean?"

"Call it what you like. UMAD has a lot to lose. If SMMAC employs Kinck, why shouldn't UMAD employ Willens?"

Goutard sighed. "I suppose we'd better tell Kinck."

"Why?"

"Well, if there's no profit in helping Willens . . ."

And then I had one of my ideas. "There may be no profit, but there could be insurance. Willens is in trouble. He must be or he wouldn't ask me to send this message. Kinck's security has been too good for him. Now he's up against it. Time's running out. He has to take a chance. That means trusting me. He does. He has no choice. He gives me the warning signal to send. I send it."

"What? They'd be waiting for us!" he exclaimed.

I smiled. "If they get it in time. Supposing it gets delayed? We couldn't help it. I did my best—with your help. You see?"

"No."

"A few days ago you were saying that the longer we delayed, the greater the risk of our running into opposition. Well, they haven't heard a word from their man Willens. Suppose they've already done what you suggested they might do. Suppose they decided to reinforce Amari after all. Suppose they're already waiting for us and we're walking into a trap. It would be useful—wouldn't it?—if we had something to talk our way out with, if we had a foot in both camps. If SMMAC wins, we're on their side; if UMAD wins, *we* helped them."

He laughed suddenly and loudly. "I think you deserve a brandy, Arthur," he said jovially. He produced a bottle.

Thursday was a busy day, and it was late afternoon before Willens was able to get me alone.

"As Barbara explained, there's not a lot to it," he said.

"There's a lot of risk."

"Not if you're careful. My friends over there are monitoring that frequency for ten minutes after every hour, twenty-four hours a day. I'll give you their call sign. The moment you get an acknowledgment, which should be within a few seconds, switch back again and read the signal. The whole thing shouldn't take more than two minutes. It's a piece of cake."

"What is the signal?"

"That's in code. Very simple words and in English. You'll have no trouble."

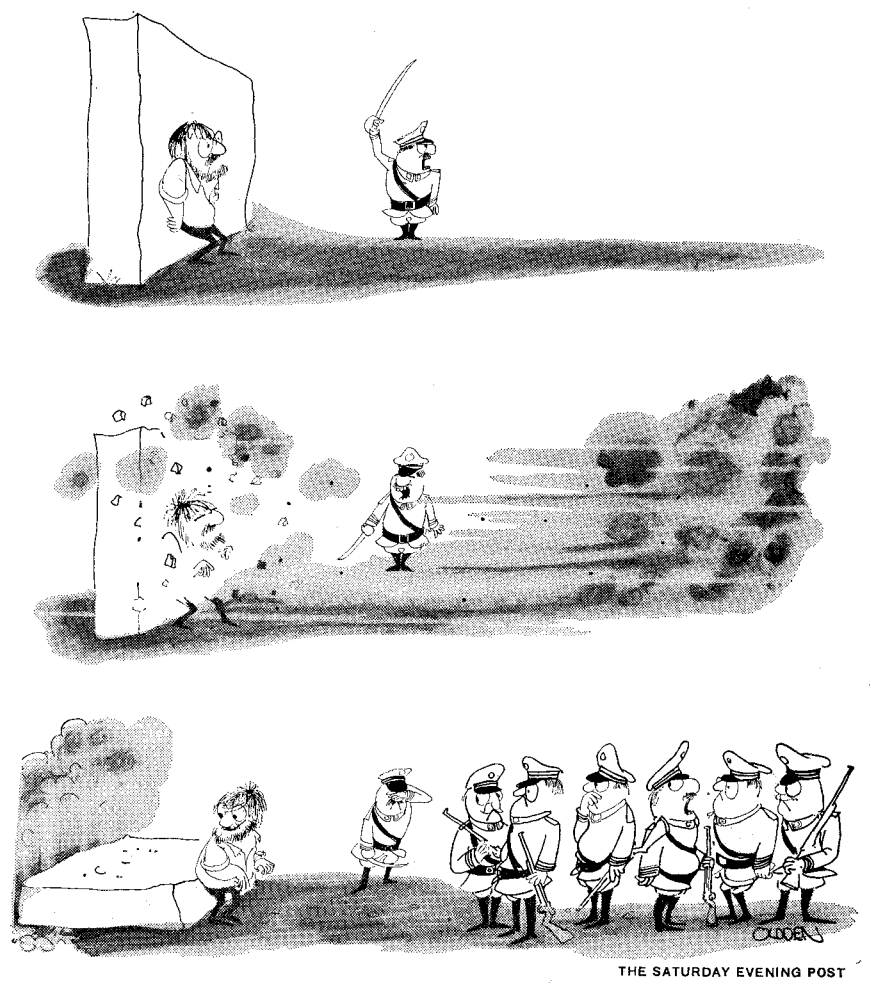
"What do the words mean?"

"They call for an air reconnaissance early tomorrow over what Kinck calls Zone A. They also put Amari on the alert."

"So that they can shoot us up?"

"Don't worry. Spearhead won't get that far. When Kinck sees the planes, he'll know he's too late. He'll call it off. SMMAC doesn't want real trouble any more than we do."

"'We' being UMAD?"



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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"That's right. Both sides will just pretend it didn't happen."

"What's in it for me?"

"A job with us in Amari if you want it. Same pay as this one, but a contract for a year and a bonus of five thousand West German marks, payable in advance."

"How far in advance?"

"Well, I don't have the money on me now."

He tried to carry it off with a smile, but it was an uneasy smile. And so it should have been. For running a risk like that, I was expected to take his word that I would get paid. When I'd said that he was in trouble, I had been making the understatement of the year—he was desperate. If I had really been intending to do what he wanted, instead of delaying the signal until it was useless, I'd have laughed in his face. As it was, I merely looked disappointed. "That's not very satisfactory."

He produced a paper from his pocket. "I've written you a personal IOU." He offered me the IOU and another paper with it. "That's the signal with full instructions what to do. You can't go wrong. The great thing is that it goes off as soon as possible tonight, Arthur. You do understand that, don't you?"

I could feel the tension in him as I took the IOU and the signal. He almost didn't want to let them go. He wanted to be absolutely sure he had me first.

"I'll do my best," I said. "We don't become operational until your group moves out tonight to occupy the customs post. You won't get there until ten o'clock. If Troppmann decides to go with you, it should be easy. If he stays behind or if Kinck is hovering around, I'll have to wait a bit."

"I realize that. But do your best."

"Of course. There's one other thing, though. I think Goutard is suspicious."

"Why?"

"He's a suspicious type. He saw me talking to your wife. Besides, we've been friends a long time. We share a hut. He knows when I've got something on my mind. He keeps asking questions. He's not easy to put off. It might be possible to bring him in, though."

"Would he play?"

"On the same terms?"

"If necessary."

"I don't know. He might. He's not too happy about this setup. I could put out a feeler."

"For God's sake, be careful."

"I'll be careful for my own sake," I replied.

"I guess you will," he said. "But I'll tell you something. The difficult part is going to be when Kinck decides to call it off and pull out. There are going to be a lot of red faces and itchy trigger fingers around here. We'll have to play it very straight. We'll have to be browned-off, worried about the future, and sore with Kinck. When they pay us off we ask for air passage to Entebbe. We go to Amari from there. You follow?"

"I follow."

Later, in the hut, I reported to Goutard and showed him the IOU. "He's ready to do the same for you," I said.

"He'd better be." He grinned. "It'll be something for him to do tonight while we're waiting in that customs post," he said.

My stomach tightened. I had almost forgotten that within a few hours we would be making the final preparations for our assault. I forced myself to concentrate.

"The only thing left to decide now," I said, "is when I *do* send the signal. Obviously not tonight, but how long do I leave it tomorrow?"

He thought for a moment, and then got out his map. "Assuming that we have no trouble at the first roadblock, we'll be here in this place Sikafu by seven. If we cut that phone line before they can use it, no warning will have gone out by seven. Sikafu is a small place, but it might have a radio. I think we must assume that after seven the news will begin to get through to Amari. In bits, of course, because the monkeys won't be thinking straight. In Amari they'll start running around in circles trying to sort it out. By then we should be in this place Matata, roughly halfway. Reconnaissance planes wouldn't turn Kinck back at that stage. If they started to shoot him up on the road, things might change, but we'll have to chance that. My estimate is that it will take them four hours at least to react at all. You could send the signal anytime you get the opportunity after we're through Sikafu. But don't be in too much of a hurry."

"I certainly won't. Don't you worry."

He grinned at me. "I won't worry. But what I meant, Arthur, was this. That message is only insurance in case things go wrong. If it looks as though they're going really well, it might be better not to send the signal at all. You'll have to decide on your own. Just don't decide too quickly. Decide like a professional. You know."

I nodded. What else could I do?

At nine that night we became operational.

As far as Spearhead was concerned, that meant that Sergeant Musa mounted the M.A.G. machine gun on the command truck and that Troppmann and I gave our walkie-talkies a final check. Then Troppmann took off the padlock he kept on the big radio and connected the long whip aerial. He tested the set and then handed the padlock over to me.

That wasn't, I should add, as much of an act of trust as it may sound. The motor-generator which ran the set worked off the truck battery and made a loud whining noise. If I had really wanted to transmit Willens's signal that night, I would have had to think up a way of bluffing Sergeant Musa. He was a complete blockhead, of course, but even so, it would have been difficult to explain why I had to run the set when I should have been asleep. I was glad that the need didn't arise.

Shortly after nine, Goutard and Willens completed the loading of their trucks. Then Kinck arrived, and there was a last-minute recap of the orders.

All that Goutard and his group had to do that night was to take over the Mahindi customs post which had been evacuated for them earlier in the evening. That was easy enough, but still, I could feel the tension rising; just my own tension, probably, but I thought I sensed it in the others, too. Barbara Willens was there to kiss her husband good-bye. Both of them studiously ignored me.

At a signal from Kinck, the two trucks moved off down the secondary road. They had their headlights on, and we stood watching them until they were out of sight among the trees. Then Kinck walked over with Troppmann and me to the command truck and I switched on the walkie-talkie.

After about ten minutes, Goutard's voice squawked out of the speaker.

"Anvil to Spearhead."

"Go ahead, Anvil."

"Am turning onto Matendo road."

"Okay."

Twenty minutes went by.

"Anvil to Spearhead." Goutard's voice was faint this time.

"Go ahead, Anvil."

"Approaching objective. Lights out."

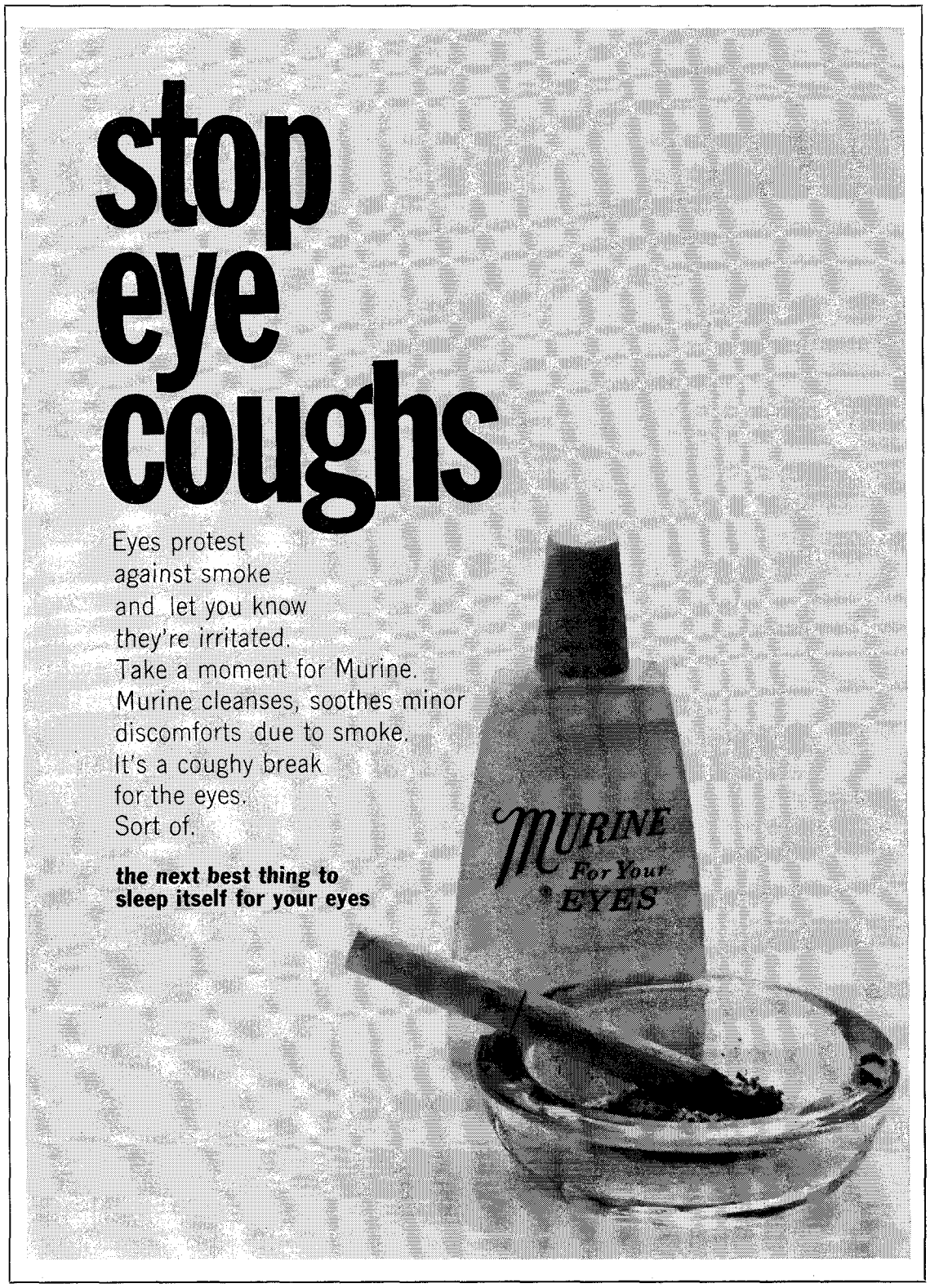
"Okay."

"No further reports. See you later."

I switched off the walkie-talkie.

We had gone to war.

(TO BE CONCLUDED)



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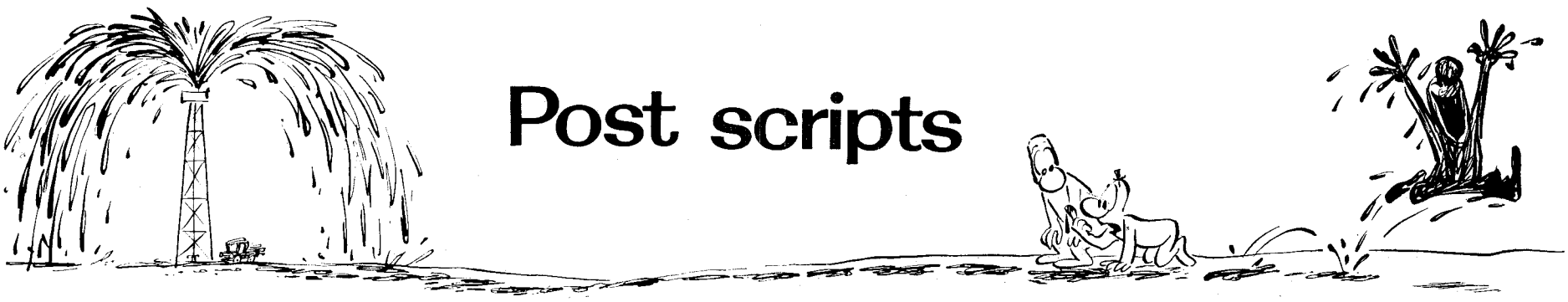
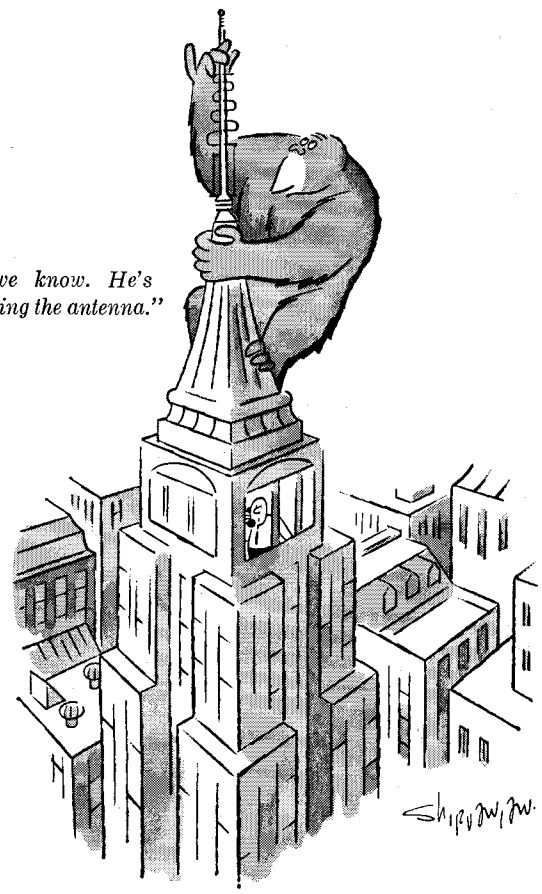
Post scripts

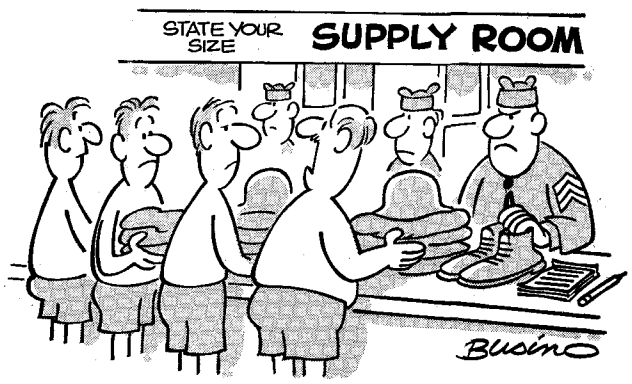


"Mud! That's what it is, just plain ol' mud!"



"Yes, we know. He's just fixing the antenna."

"For God's sake, stall them for a few minutes."



"When the party bigwigs told me they were starting a 'draft Fogarty' movement, I naturally assumed. . . ."

"Why, Sandy, you're all legs!"

"Quit bugging me, man. I'm not looking for easy answers."

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Letter from Saigon

Electing a president during the middle of a war isn't easy, particularly when a variety of generals want the job. Trevor Armbrister writes the managing editor how it works.

Dear Otto:

Last Sunday I went to the races at Phu Tho, five miles west of Saigon. It was an oppressively hot day, but the rains were still several hours away, and the crowd was in a holiday mood. Barefoot youngsters darted about, hawking candies, peanuts and balloons.

Just before the start of the first race, my driver tugged at my sleeve and pointed to a small corral behind the grandstand. One by one the tiny Asian ponies were walking up the path and entering the enclosure. Their tongues lolled grotesquely, all of them were frothing at the mouth, and I began to wonder if they'd been drugged. The driver must have noticed my astonishment because he suddenly grinned and nodded. Mixing his few words of English with a torrent of pidgin French, he proceeded to explain that this was an ordinary sight, that—in his view at least—the horses had indeed been "treated." He said that he'd come to the track many times, that he had always lost money, and that he suspected the races were fixed, but he still enjoyed the spectacle. He would come again.

Most Vietnamese seem to feel the same way about next week's elections. On Sunday, September 3, as ordained by South Vietnam's new constitution, an estimated 5.3 million voters will cast their ballots for a president, a vice president and 60 senators. So far, the campaign has produced no charismatic leader and—since all leftists and neutralists are banned—no meaningful discussion of issues. To be sure, there has been a great deal of talk about social justice, but there are moments in history when people would prefer almost any kind of peace to an as-yet unrealized democracy. The peace issue has been introduced, but seems unlikely to become very important. Then, too, the candidates are restricting their campaigns to a series of appearances in 22 locations, and may not even personally attend all of these. They won't visit the countryside at all—where most of Vietnam's 16.5 million people live.

At this point it seems clear that the military ticket of Lt. Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, the present chief of state, and his running mate, Air Vice Marshal and Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky, will win rather handily. Thieu is an enigmatic, 44-year-old Southerner, a convert to Catholicism, whose nickname is "Cao Gia"—the old fox. A pipe-smoking, unostentatious fellow—unlike many generals, he does not drink and has never been seen in a nightclub—he has been involved in most of his country's coups, and he has survived the jungle of army politics only by seeming to be more of an elder statesman than a strongman.

Neither Thieu nor his running mate, the dapper and ever-quotable Marshal Ky, evokes much adulation from the populace, and there has been speculation that they might compensate for this by arranging for some hanky-panky at the polls. I think it's unlikely that anything of the sort will take place. The laws against fraud are surprisingly stiff, they will probably be enforced, and this election may rank as one of the most honest ever held in an Asian nation. The truth of the matter is that Thieu and Ky don't need to rig anything. The cards are already stacked in their favor.

As "incumbents," they command the loyalty—if not the affection—of the roughly 600,000 men under arms and the 215,000 civil servants. The army is not a monolith, and the ruling junta has dutifully informed all military personnel that they are perfectly free to vote for whomever they please. Nonetheless, the feeling persists here that the "khaki" party will deem it advisable to vote en masse for Thieu and Ky.

A similar suspicion exists with regard to the 29,000 Revolutionary Development workers who are engaged in "pacifying" the countryside. Not long ago Gen. Nguyen Duc Thang, the able and energetic chief of the R.D. program, showed me a letter he had sent out to all his cadres. It ordered them to explain the election to villagers and to assist them wherever possible; it strictly forbade them to tell the villagers which candidates to support. A few days later I visited a hamlet 20 miles north of Saigon. With the local R.D. chief acting as interpreter, I rattled off the names of some of the candidates and asked an elderly farmer named Vo Van Loi how he would vote. For a moment Loi looked puzzled, and he fingered his scraggly goatee. The R.D. chief leaned across the table and said something in rapid-fire Vietnamese. A smile spread across Loi's face. "There are only two candidates," he said—looking at me directly now. "Thieu and Ky. They are the brilliant stars of this country. The people must have them."

Aside from such unofficial but nonetheless powerful organizational backing, Thieu and Ky have other advantages. They have remained in office for more than two years, and this is quite an accomplishment in a country where governments used to change frequently. The people may not love them, but at least they'll know who they are. This is not to say that the civilian candidates are "unknowns." Only two of them, however, are regarded as having even a remote chance of victory. The first of these is Tran Van Huong, a chubby, 65-year-old intellectual. Known as "the bicycle-riding mayor" of Saigon during the mid-1950's, Huong also served as prime minister for 84 days in 1964 and 1965. Observers conceded that he is capable and honest, if a bit uninspiring.

Not long ago I interviewed Huong at a friend's apartment. He was dressed in gray slacks and a white shirt, and from time to time he pulled off his rubber shower shoes and scratched his feet absentmindedly. "The generals pledge that it will be a fair election," Huong said. "I hope so. Many times we talk about democracy and freedom, but the people have seen nothing yet. They don't believe it."

Huong seemed particularly concerned about what he called the "crisis of authority." "People don't care about law any more. Corruption exists from the top level of government all the way down to the soldier." If he won, he said, he would have to resolve this crisis before considering any peace talks with the enemy. He said he would propose to Hanoi that elections be held "within 5 or 10 years" to let the people of both countries decide on a form of government.

Did Huong think he had a chance of winning in September? "I have no party, no organization," he replied sadly. "I don't know who will support me."

A similar dilemma confronts candidate Phan Khac Suu, the roly-poly, 62-year-old speaker of the constituent assembly. Suu served an unspectacular term as chief of state in 1965 and is an extremely affable fellow. His nickname, in fact, is "Ba Phai," which translates as sort of a "triple-threat yes-man." On the morning I saw him, Suu said he thought a civilian should win the election "because the people can love civilians more than generals." What, I asked him, were the major differences between his program and those of his rivals; on what issues did they disagree? Suu smiled. "But Mr. Huong and I are like brothers. We do not disagree." How about General Thieu? No, Suu didn't disagree with him either.

The fact that all of the candidates agree with each other on just about every issue—particularly anti-Communism—has turned what might have been an opportunity for

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meaningful debate into a rather bland charade.

To be sure, some 70-odd parties do exist in Vietnam today, and the more prominent of these have colorful nicknames. The Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang, for example, is known as "the Hillbilly Gang." Dai Viet Party members are called the "Duck's Rear End Gang." Dai Dun adherents are often referred to as "the Intestinal Worm Gang." Unfortunately, nicknames are about all these parties can claim. Most of them are so hopelessly divided that they are incapable of offering any programs.

Because of this impotence, religious groups have often stepped in to fill the political vacuum. Consider, for example, the Hoa Haos, a militantly anti-Communist sect whose members live in the Mekong Delta. They say they are above politics, but point out that they control 1.5 million votes. The Catholics--many of them refugees from the North--have their own political organization and are immensely powerful. And then there are the Buddhists. It's not too much of an exaggeration to say that this week's election is a direct result of the Buddhist demonstrations of 1966.

From the beginning the mercurial Marshal Ky was considered a shoo-in for the presidency. Early in May he announced his candidacy. Throughout Vietnam posters and banners appeared, proclaiming that "the government of Nguyen Cao Ky is the government of the poor." In their zeal to spread the word, Ky's aides even managed to post the slogan at Maxim's--a luxurious Saigon nightclub that charges customers a minimum of $3.50 per drink. Keeping on the move, Ky promised a 15-percent pay raise to all civil servants and military personnel. With his second wife, Tuyet Mai, a stunningly attractive former airline hostess, he visited hospitals, gave away cigarettes and wads of piasters.

On June 14, General Thieu entered the race. His decision, Ky remarked, "is bad news for the entire armed forces and for myself." A few days later Ky appeared at a press conference called to review the accomplishments of the military junta over the past two years. Where was General Thieu? "He's sick," replied a Ky spokesman. Actually, he hadn't even been invited.

Ky's censors began to delete news of Thieu's activities from the Saigon papers, and the rivalry between the two "began to look as if it could result in a shooting match," recalls one veteran diplomat. Clearly concerned, U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker invited both men to a luncheon at his villa. Unless the two officers resolved their differences, Bunker warned, their nation's already fragile hopes of achieving democracy might go down the drain. Neither Ky nor Thieu seemed willing to budge.

Now the situation became even more complicated. Word arrived from Bangkok that Gen. Duong Van Minh wanted to return home as a candidate. "Big" Minh had led the successful coup against Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. Thirteen months later he had been "retired" and sent into honorable exile as an "ambassador at large." But he was still a popular figure.

A second complication stemmed from the candidacy of a thin, bespectacled economist named Au Truong Thanh. A former finance minister in Ky's cabinet (he resigned, he says, "to protest the police-state atmosphere"), Thanh wanted "to turn the election into a referendum on the fundamental issue of peace or war." If he had any specific plans for achieving this peace, he kept them to himself. He merely told me, as he told others, that "Peace is like a wedding. Before asking about the details of the ceremony, you must fall in love with your partner." This kind of talk displeased the junta.

The crisis reached its climax late in June. With rumors of coups and countercoups flooding through Saigon, the 45-member armed-forces council held a series of tense meetings. Item No. 1 on the agenda was "Big" Minh.

Minh's departure, the generals agreed, had marked the end of a protracted power struggle within the armed forces. A new generation of younger officers had taken command. Minh's return would reopen old wounds and possibly set the stage for political disorders--disorders that militant groups like Tri Quang's Buddhists would try to exploit. "Big" Minh, the generals concluded, "cannot yet return home at the present time." The National Assembly banned both Minh and Au Truong Thanh.

Item No. 2 on the agenda was more ticklish. The split in the armed forces was widening daily. Either Thieu or Ky, the generals realized, would have to withdraw as a presidential candidate. But which one? At all costs the generals wanted to avoid putting themselves on the record by voting on this matter. They decided instead to ask both men to appear before them.

Psychologically, the setting seemed to favor Thieu. He was a Southerner among Southerners (Ky was born near Hanoi). He outranked Ky, and he was also older. Shrewdly, he did not attack his rival directly. Many of the generals, he knew, had been irritated by Ky's flamboyant campaign tactics, and a few had been miffed by his promises to "eliminate corruption in high places." He decided to remain quiet--let Ky defend himself in front of his peers.

No votes were taken, but by nine o'clock on the second night of the meeting it was clear that Ky was losing ground. Reluctantly, he agreed to withdraw his candidacy and run instead on Thieu's ticket. "We must all make sacrifices," he said. "I just wanted to show the military that here is one of their leaders--me--who is not fighting just for his own selfish interests."

Under Vietnam's new constitution, the president has enormous powers. He hires and fires the prime minister and has a veto over the entire cabinet. He is solely responsible for domestic and foreign policy, he makes up the budget, he even appoints province chiefs.

In comparison, the vice president's tasks are minuscule.

A few days ago I asked Ky how he felt about the constitutional limitations on the vice president. He and Thieu, he replied, had agreed upon an arrangement whereby they would "share" all major responsibilities. He called this agreement quite satisfactory, but I got the distinct impression that he was apprehensive about it. "It's not easy for us to kiss and make up," one of Ky's aides was quoted as saying not long ago. "When you shake hands with General Thieu, you have to make sure afterward that you have all your fingers."

The preelection mood here is cynical. A strange malaise seems to have settled over Saigon. A few days ago I talked to Dang Van Sung, the publisher of the daily Chinh Luân. Sung is a former province chief; he is a close personal friend of Ky, but he is also fiercely independent. Over a Scotch and soda he admitted concern about the election. "I hope that this is not just a formality to make official the position of someone," he said. "I hope not"--Sung shook his head--"but maybe it is." Most voters share his fears. Like the bettors at the Phu Tho race track, they hope the election will bring them something tangible. But they're not counting on it.

Best regards,

Tuan

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Big-city schools

Continued from page 23

There were always lost kids wandering in the halls.

Soon after becoming chairman of the local school board, I spent a morning at this school, found a very few bright spots (chiefly an experienced and motherly art teacher who had put her ninth-graders to doing precise architectural drawings of the details over the windows and doors on the local tenements) and an ocean of gloom. I shall never forget the principal of this school ushering me into the auditorium to look at six classes' worth of children—180 kids—herded here for a "study period" because there was no classroom in which they could sit. The principal was a decent, kindly, not unintelligent man who had been head of the science department in a middle-class white high school before he passed the junior-high principal's exam. He waved at the 180 boys and girls huddled in varying attitudes of dejection, boredom and rebellion, and he said, "We just have to face the fact that half of these children will never hold a job in their lives."

Scalea managed to get us a new principal for this school, a tough little man with leadership qualities less subject to shell shock; but in most situations our resources for making any changes at all were frighteningly small. Though new money was already pouring into the New York schools, it was all allocated by central headquarters; teachers were examined, qualified, appointed and assigned by central headquarters; all schools were required to follow citywide "courses of study" to the point where the most common single answer to a child's question in class was, "We don't learn that in this grade." If our staff or our board got any bright ideas, in short, we had neither the means nor the authority to do anything about them; as a local board, we were empowered merely to "advise" the Board of Education, and we were supposed to explain and defend the board and its policies to the community (which, however, we flatly refused to do). Despite all the restrictions, we were in fact occasionally able to accomplish something—but it is impossible for anyone who has never had to operate in a bureaucracy as all-encompassing and power-hungry as the New York public-school system to imagine the time that has to be taken to shake free of even an obviously stupid rule proclaimed by the superintendent of schools.

An example that sticks particularly in the memory grew out of the New York transit strike of January, 1966. As part of a district program to ease overcrowding and provide a little integration, we were busing about 300 Negro and Puerto Rican children from East Harlem down to white schools in Yorkville. The school buses kept running through the strike, though they were of course late and fantastically slow in the massive traffic jams every morning. Superintendent Donovan had announced that high-school students, who normally rode the subways and the public buses, would be permitted to attend the schools nearest their homes for the duration of the strike—but elementary-school children would be required to report every day to their usual schools. After all, the school buses were still running.

I had a call from East Harlem complaining about children having to wait an hour or more for their delayed buses in the cold and snow and slush of January. (The man who made the call, in the new tradition of self-destructiveness in the civil-rights movement, "demanded" that we solve the problem by closing all the schools in Yorkville for the duration of the strike.) Now, near the collection points in East Harlem where these buses stopped, we had two elementary schools involved in an experimental "More Effective Schools" (M.E.S.) program, which meant that no classroom in the school was much more than half full, and some rooms were used only part of the day. A member of my board pointed out that nothing could be easier than to notify the children at the bus stop that they could attend one of these two nearby schools until the strike ended.

Scalea said, "I can't do that."

"Why not?"

"Because our orders are that all elementary-school children are to go to their regular schools."

"Supposing we could get approval from headquarters for you to let these children go to the M.E.S. schools—would you do it?"

"Yes; it's a good idea."

I got on the telephone to Lloyd Garrison, then president of the New York Board of Education, and explained the situation. He said he would see what he could do. Superintendent Donovan was in Albany trying to pry money from the state legislature, and Garrison would have to clear it with Executive Deputy Superintendent John D. King. A superb example of how thoroughly even an able Negro must conform to get ahead in a school system, King had advanced to the post of executive deputy by unbending adherence to the rule book. The rule in this case was that elementary-school children had to go to their regular schools. Garrison called me back and said we couldn't let the kids go to the M.E.S. schools. I asked why, and Garrison, an unusually sweet-tempered and upright man, said, "Martin, I don't understand why." At my urging, he tried again.

Some hours later he called a second time and explained the reasoning. Our district was in an unusual position. In most districts there were no seats available in the schools near the bus stops: "King says that if we let you do it, we'd have to let everybody do it."

At this point I became somewhat angry. "That's exactly right," I said. "Then those district superintendents who *can* get the kids off the street corners will do so; and those who *can't* will be men enough to tell the parents that they can't and tell them why."

Garrison agreed, but there was yet another call, this one about 9:30 at night. Was I sure that Scalea really wanted this authority? Yes, I was sure. Well, if Scalea would personally call King and ask him, King would give him a go-ahead, provided it wasn't publicized and wasn't regarded as a precedent. I called Scalea; Scalea called King. Presently we had an interesting demonstration of what an able administrator can do. In 15 minutes on the telephone after 10 o'clock that night, Scalea organized a group of teachers and parents to go to the bus stops the next morning at 8 and send the children off to the schools around the corner.

We had lots of these hassles with headquarters. Once we had a month-long battle to retain at her job an "acting" assistant principal, the only Negro or Puerto Rican staff member in a school more than half Negro and Puerto Rican, who was to be transferred by headquarters *because she had passed her exam for a regular assistant-principal's license!* Under the rules of the system, whenever a list of newly licensed assistant principals was published, all positions held by "acting" assistant principals were automatically declared vacant, and anybody with seniority or a higher score on the exam could push our very popular and successful lady out of her school—even though she was now, for the first time, legally qualified for the job she was doing. We won that one.

I think (perhaps it's local pride) that New York has the nation's champion rule-bound bureaucracy, but most of the big-city school systems are run in much the same manner. Sociologists advising the Chicago schools have found *de facto* centralization there every bit as extreme as it is in New York; following their recommendations, the Chicago Board of Education this year will try out the idea of local school boards, which may even have some independent authority. And Cyril Sargent, an educational consultant to Philadelphia, said recently that when he recommended the idea of "education parks" (groups of schools clustered together, with students bused in from different parts of town, to defeat the educational consequences of segregated housing), it was because he thought such large units would have a better chance to escape the crushing control of that city's central office.

The superintendent of schools doesn't live who won't talk about the flexibility of his leadership and the unfairness of critics who accuse his school system of rigidity, but this line of gab usually vanishes when some specific reform is proposed. I remember a national meeting where I pointed out that at least a third of the big-city "transiency"—the moving around of children from school to school—was caused by the moving of their families to new homes in the same general neighborhood but across some artificial school-district boundary line. If the school systems would encourage children who still could walk to their old school to continue going there, the teachers would have a better chance to remedy a fair fraction of the failures in the slums. The then superintendent in Detroit, who had just berated most of us at the meeting for our intolerance of superintendents, immediately proclaimed that it couldn't be done—all the safety procedures were planned for children who lived within the district, some schools would become overcrowded, and so forth. I suggested that at least the people on the scene, the principals and district superintendents, could be empowered to decide whether a stay-in-the-same-school policy made sense in their neighborhoods; but the Detroit superintendent wouldn't hear of it—that sort of policy had to be made citywide. . . .

Similarly, the instinctive reaction of the big-city school system to demands for integration is to attempt some sort of citywide program. The usual approach, and the one tried out in New York, is called "open enrollment," which means that children in the ghetto may apply for busing to schools in white neighborhoods. In some cities, of course, housing is so segregated that only a citywide effort offers any hope at all. But our district all by itself was 60 percent Negro and Puerto Rican in the schools—we didn't need to import colored children by bus to integrate them.

Under New York's open-enrollment program, moreover, colored children from all over Harlem and northern Manhattan were being shipped into our schools without any thought for a relationship between the school and the child's own community. A bused child's neighborhood would never know that he had won a prize or appeared in a play or been elected to an office or got into trouble. Moreover, because citywide policy had proclaimed that busing was "a right, not a privilege," the "receiving schools" could not reject even the saddest and most dangerous misfits. The principals of the "sending schools" were under almost irresistible pressure to use open enrollment as a way of dumping children they couldn't control. Some principals urged the parents of "disturbed" children to try their luck in the new surroundings of a white school; at least one, to our certain knowledge, forged a parent's signature on a request to bus a juvenile arsonist.

Ed Scalea, studying the rule book eagerly, found a way to get some of our schools out of the open-enrollment program and into something the district could run itself. The excuse was the overcrowding of our own East Harlem schools: We could relieve the crush by busing some East Harlem children to our underused white schools in Yorkville. In the fall of 1963 we started a joint "East Harlem-Yorkville" project that was unquestionably the most significant accomplishment of our district.

It involved busing about 150 first- and second-graders from our two most overcrowded East

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Harlem schools to the two Yorkville schools that had the greatest number of unused seats (one was the school where my own two boys went). By doing this, we could make the first two grades in each of the Yorkville schools about one-third Negro and Puerto Rican. We could do even more.

One of the difficulties about open enrollment had been the "homogeneous grouping" of children in the New York schools, which puts the best pupils in a "top" class of each grade, the next best in the next-to-top class and so forth down to the worst pupils in a bottom class. The usual result was that the bused-in children wound up in segregated bottom classes. This did not greatly help either them as individuals or race relations as an ideal. It is hard to avoid this horror when you pick up your students for the first time in fifth or sixth grade, at the age of 10 or 11: No purpose is served by trying to teach in one class two groups of children who are three or four years apart in reading ability. But we were taking children at the age of six or seven, when there just wasn't much visible difference in what they could do: the grouping problem could be made manageable.

Scalea, in what must be called a stroke of genius, decided that he could keep administrative procedure pure and still gain our ends by scoring the selection tests separately for the East Harlem and Yorkville contingents. Then, if there were three first-grade classes in the receiving school, the top third in each group would be put in the "best" class, the middle third in the "average" class, the lowest third in the "slow" class. In fact, few of the East Harlem children scored as well as the average Yorkville child on the test, but the teachers weren't told that. So far as they were concerned, they had "homogeneously grouped" classes which happened to be about one-third Negro and Puerto Rican.

That was the first of the project's three main components: to achieve physical integration in the classrooms. The second was to capitalize on the fact that we had a "community transfer" rather than an "open-enrollment" program—all the children who rode the buses lived in the same neighborhood. The receiving schools could keep in touch with the community that sent the children, the sending schools could be influenced by what was happening in Yorkville, the parents from both groups could work together on what had become, to some degree, shared problems. A "four-schools" association was set up to give people a framework.

The third basic feature of the plan was my idea. I thought it essential that the teachers who were working in these classrooms should not be thinking race-color-creed all day long. If we simply offered the standard New York course of study, the teachers would know, from their experience in these middle-class white schools, how children "should" react. But if we brought in some new stuff for the kids to do, we could protect the teachers from their own expectations, and give both Yorkville and East Harlem something to talk about other than skin color.

A new reading program would tread on teachers toes: that's the one thing the first- and second-grade teacher thinks she can do now. (It's also an area where any teacher should be allowed to choose her own materials, old or new.) Scalea and I and some other members of the local board considered a lot of new programs, and decided that the best bet would be the new elementary-school economics course being developed by Lawrence Senesh of Purdue in the schools of Elkhart, Ind.

The Senesh program is especially ingenious because it uses much of what is in the usual social-studies programs for the early grades—daddy at work, mother in the kitchen, "community helpers"—but uses them to teach economics. Children learn about the division of labor, the way the marketplace determines what is produced in the factories, how we pay for public services, why people are sometimes unemployed (very important in the slums, where unemployment often seems a kind of punishment from God, spreading shame through the family).

I knew Senesh, an ebullient Hungarian with a heavy accent, who escaped to this country before World War II and served in the U.S. Army He wanted to try out his materials in integrated conditions in a big city. He would come to New York and help our teachers (who would need help to present the material properly) for no more than his out-of-pocket expenses.

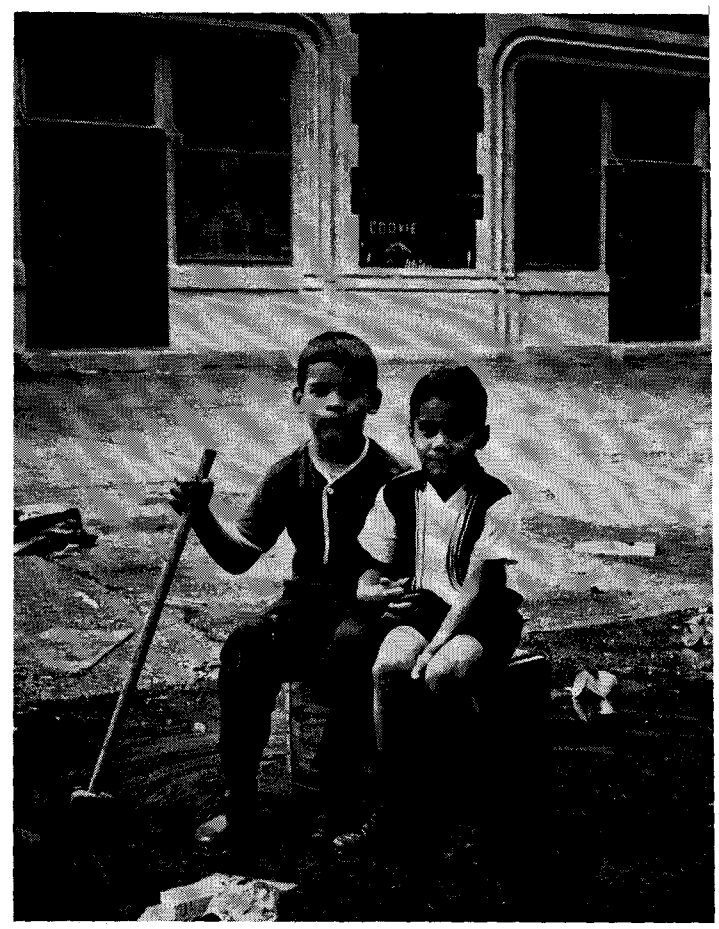
Scalea felt he had to follow the rule book, so he told central headquarters that Senesh was coming to work with six of our teachers in the first phase of the program. One of my worst hours on the local school board was spent sitting in the library of a Yorkville school with Senesh and the principal and the six teachers, and watching a deputy superintendent and four assistant superintendents take over the session. Senesh was to give our teachers their start in figuring out what they were supposed to do, but with all this brass in the room, the teachers were scared to ask questions themselves. When the superintendents left, they took with them five of the six packets of material Senesh had brought for the teachers. Fortunately, the teachers were pretty, Senesh thought the incident was funny, and after we'd had a drink together at my house he telegraphed home for more books.

The first year of the East Harlem-Yorkville project—1963–64—was a delight to know. The teachers at the Yorkville schools found the classes manageable, and most of the bused-in children seemed to be doing well. We never had anything resembling "objective" verification of the program—I doubt that honest verification would have been possible, anyway, using the blunt instruments of educational research—but Senesh dug out an odd and encouraging fact. He found that his material was being presented in greater detail and depth in the "top" class, and that the East Harlem kids were mostly following along fine. When he asked the teachers of the "middle" groups why they weren't trying some of the things the top group was doing, he was told, "Our children aren't as good as they are—they're the top group." In fact, many of the East Harlem first-graders in the top group had scored below the average Yorkville child in the middle group, but we had given our teachers a new table of expectations—a new stereotype, if you like—which had persuaded them to treat some of the "disadvantaged" children from East Harlem as *better* than most of the pupils from Yorkville. As a result of this change in image, the East Harlem children did better work.

There was to be a fourth step in this project, but we could never take it. I had hoped that as we expanded the program some of the teachers who had succeeded with East Harlem children in the integrated classes would be willing to take a year in East Harlem schools, trying out their techniques and expectations with segregated classes. Meanwhile, teachers from the East Harlem schools could come down to Yorkville to work in integrated surroundings.

Of course, before we could even ask the Yorkville teachers for this favor, we had to be able to guarantee to them that after their year in East Harlem they could get their old jobs back. Here the headquarters bureau of personnel said a firm No, although the next contract between the Board of Education and the United Federation of Teachers contained a clause specifically permitting what we had wanted to do the year before. But by then the steam had gone out of our project.

Something went wrong, and it's hard to say what. My personal favorite reason is that we tried to expand the project without expanded resources. The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation helped with successive grants of $10,000 for community relations and teacher training, but there were limits to how far these could stretch. For the second year we added three more schools in Yorkville and two in



East Harlem. It turned out to be impossible to create an effective "nine-schools" parents association, however, and some of the vitality of the "four-schools" association was sapped by the fact that the children from the two original East Harlem schools were now spread over five schools in Yorkville. Meanwhile, two new schools were opened in East Harlem, relieving some of the overcrowding at our sending schools, which meant that both the parents and the staffs of the East Harlem schools were far less eager to bus children.

Much of the energy that might have gone into constructive planning for the project had to be diverted to a series of fights. The most enervating of these came in our own constituency. Our district includes the New York school with the wealthiest student body, PS 6, in the heart of the high-rent district. It was about 95 percent white in "ethnic distribution." Apartments for rent or for sale are listed in the paper as "PS 6 district." We redrew the famous "six district" to reduce the school's enrollment by about 200 and make room for children from East Harlem. Scalea had done a first draft of the rezoning, and he brought it to us at an executive session of the local board, along with a big block-by-block map of the area. I remember borrowing a compass and tracing out on the map equal distances from PS 6 and from the other schools to which the 200 children reassigned from PS 6 could be sent, to make sure that in every (well, almost every) case, the child's new school was closer to his home than PS 6 was.

This exercise in geography did not, however, do us much good with the parents whose children were to be reassigned. They got up at public meetings and denounced us for violating the sacred principles of the neighborhood school, and threatened us with lawsuits and worse. I told these grim rich people that the schools to which their children were being assigned were at least as good as PS 6, even though they never got in the newspapers (which was true, by the way). But there wasn't much satisfaction in that for people who were paying higher rents to live in the "six district" and were now being taken out of it without any reduction in their rents. They did sue, finally—and our care paid off when the court ruled that each child

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transferred would travel "the same or in most instances a shorter distance to his new school. The newly assigned schools are 'neighborhood' schools." But it didn't make a wholesome atmosphere for the growth of the East Harlem-Yorkville project.

The goodwill that permeated the project survived its loss of momentum. When a two-week strike of school-bus drivers left our East Harlem children without transportation, 90-odd Yorkville mothers drove their own cars to pick them up in the morning and deliver them home in the afternoon. Yorkville ladies put up posters in East Harlem, went to meetings and even rang doorbells in one of the city's most publicized "dangerous slums" to urge Negro and Puerto Rican parents to send their children. And I was touched this spring by the degree to which the parents' associations of East Harlem fought off the black-power types—refused to attend their meetings or sign their petitions—insisting that East Harlem still had reason to hope for progress through integration. This took a good deal more courage, moral and physical, than people who are not living in the ghetto can easily imagine.

It also took faith. We have, I think, played square throughout. We talked to people in terms of what we thought could be done with profit for the children, not in terms of slogans, and when a civil-rights spokesman in our district started angrily asking, "Why is it always our children who ride the bus?"—a complaint that has driven the Board of Education into paroxysms of guilt and dishonesty—I told him what seemed to me the inescapable truth: "It's because they're disadvantaged. One of their disadvantages is that they ride the bus." This hurts, of course; but it hurts a lot less than being lied to.

I will be warmed on cold days in future winters by the memory of some statements by mothers, especially by East Harlem mothers, at the public meeting last June, after I had resigned. But there should be, I think, a limit to the number of Brownie points one can accumulate simply for trying one's best. And the fact seems to be that we have not been able to do much for the great majority of our Negro and Puerto Rican students who still attend the segregated schools of East Harlem.

There have, of course, been some changes since the new Board of Education was installed in 1961. The state and the city have added more than half a billion dollars a year to the operating budget of the New York school system. Our buildings are no longer crowded, our classes are smaller, we have more teachers in every building for fewer children and lots of shiny new textbooks and movable tables where once there were screwed-down desks, and we have Head Starts and kindergartens and full-time instead of double-session first grades, and psychological and sociological jargon till you could scream—but more than half the children in our East Harlem schools just are not making it by any definition.

What the principals and teachers of our district have wanted from the local school board is that we should say it is not their fault. Many, perhaps most, of the teachers in East Harlem work as hard as they know how to work, every day. They hope as hard as the parents themselves that *this* year the spark will catch in more children. Not many people are close enough to sainthood to work as hard and as hopefully as our teachers work, and then to blame themselves when their efforts fail. They cannot, of course, bring themselves to blame the children, so they blame the community, the "culture of the disadvantaged." Then they wonder why the community sometimes mistrusts them.

What we have told the staff in our district is that we are not interested in who is to blame for current conditions. At one meeting I asked our principals to consider the East Harlem mother who sees an 18-year-old unemployable part-time thief lounging against the wall up the block, and remembers what he was like 10 years ago—and then looks at her own 8-year-old playing in the gutter, and can see nothing that makes his chances much different from those the older boy had 10 years ago.

"And there were westerns and cartoons and . . ."

There is no question of saying that teachers have caused this horror—but to tell the mother that it is all her fault is an unthinkable insult, a disgusting cruelty, and a lie.

The school is almost the only tool society has with which to help these children, and the schools are not resented and hated in the slums as the current fashions say they are. A majority of the Harlem residents queried about 18 months ago for the House Education and Labor Committee told (Negro) interviewers they thought it was the kids' own fault that they didn't learn in school. In his investigation of the juvenile gangs in Brooklyn some years ago, Harrison Salisbury of *The New York Times* reported that the dropouts did not have hostile attitudes toward school—they felt that the school was the only institution in their lives that had ever cared what happened to them.

The one thing we as a school board have asked from our principals and teachers is that if the school program didn't work last year or this year, for God's sake don't do the same things the same ways next year. Don't expect miracle drugs. Look around: There are lots of different sorts of material in print these days, especially for teaching reading. Try something new that looks good to you; see what happens.

To be sure, we cannot achieve in the schools world peace, perfect justice and a high income for everybody. But where we now fail with 60 percent of a neighborhood's children, perhaps if we try very hard we can fail next year with only 50 percent, and the year after that with only 40 percent. I can see no way to advance toward this goal in our cities other than by giving the highest possible degree of freedom to the people who do the work in the classrooms.

A year ago, at a meeting with the Board of Education, I said that what we in the neighborhoods wanted was simply the right for our board and our district superintendent to make our own mistakes—we thought it was unfair for the Board of Education and the superintendent of schools to insist that they had to make all the mistakes. This was taken as a joke, but I meant it.

For five years I have been shouting about this sort of "decentralization," and last spring I had the bittersweet experience of seeing the word become a political slogan in New York: Everybody is now for decentralization. In April the Board of Education itself forcibly declared in favor of decentralization. By June, though, it had forgotten its pledge that new money and new personnel would be assigned to the districts as a whole, to be used as the local staff and local board thought best; all this year's new teachers have been assigned to a new scheme that will put two teachers into all first- and second-grade classrooms in slum schools. This may or may not be a good idea, depending on local circumstance; but for all its chatter about decentralization the board made the decision for everybody, regardless of local circumstances.

The function of a lay board of education is to improve the performance of the professionals by feeding into the system information about what the community thinks is wrong and by asking the questions that force the professionals to look for intelligent answers. A central big-city board of education is no good for this purpose, in New York or anywhere else, because its members can't know enough about what is going on. In the local boards New York lucked into a device that might have been useful, but the Board of Education, which has had four presidents during my five years, has lacked the desire and very probably the capacity to think through the question of the kinds of authority it should delegate to make the system work.

So far as I am concerned, the battle is over, and I lost. Five years on a school board is, of course, enough. You get to know too much, especially about what "can't be done," and you come to "understand" too well the problems of the staff. What the professionals really need on their lay boards (though it isn't what they want) is the hotheaded dreamer, not the experienced and sobered "practical" man. I was coming too close to the latter category to be of any real service to the schools.

To say that my five years were a complete failure would be unfair to the hundreds of people who worked so hard with me on the many things we tried to do. But the fact is that the schools of my district are still in trouble, that the program for most children has changed little, that the quality and performance of the teaching and supervisory staffs have not noticeably improved. I cannot imagine any other potentially useful activity into which I could have put 2,500 hours (my wife says 5,000) and seen so little result. Ed Scalea, who has become a friend (sometimes an estranged friend), is also gone this fall, under doctor's orders to take a sabbatical leave. He will probably return; he says I am too impatient. But it seems to me there is a minimal degree of impatience involved in being alive.

I feel no pain (just a little discomfort) at the thought that others may succeed where I failed. My successor as chairman of the local board, Mrs. Leola Hageman, is a friend, a bright and lively resident of East Harlem, colored (which will help), a graduate of the University of Chicago (which will help even more); she already has a number of ideas which for one reason or another I would never have thought of trying out. Pessimism about the future of the big-city school systems makes sound logical argument and good newspaper copy, but in the end it is a foolish attitude. The texture of all our children's future lives is at stake in the struggle for education in the big cities. At present, it is a morass. But if enough people can remember that there is work to be done, not just arguments (or elections or lawsuits) to be won, we can eventually get ourselves out of it. ⊏

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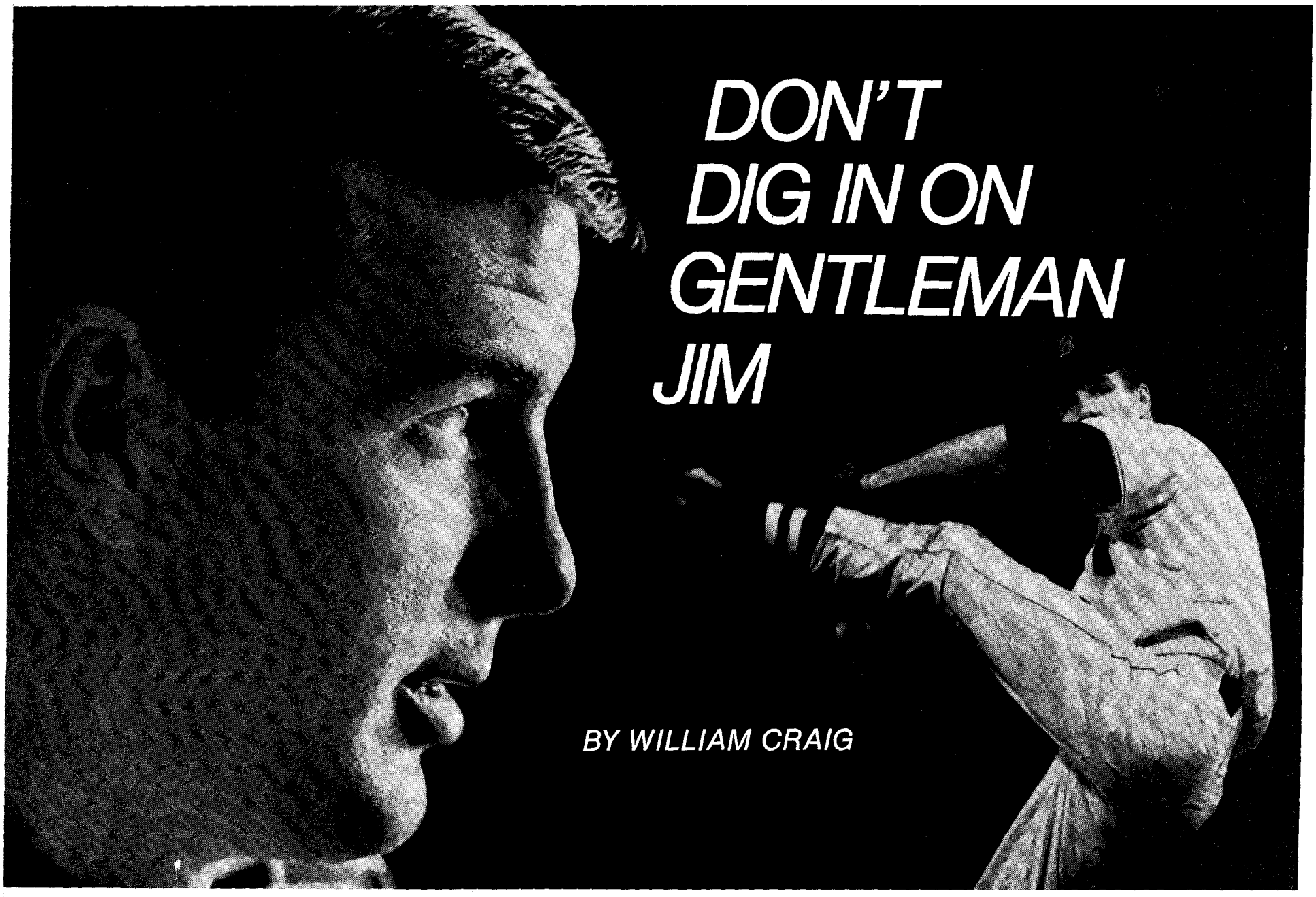

DON'T DIG IN ON GENTLEMAN JIM

BY WILLIAM CRAIG

He likes Beethoven and quotes Aristotle, but Jim Lonborg, star pitcher of the exciting young Red Sox, will dust off any overconfident batter.

He was standing by first base, taller and slimmer than I thought he would be. When I called his name, he turned, put out his hand and smiled shyly. I introduced myself and we talked just long enough to agree to meet later on, and then he had to go. He trotted out to right field, took off his cap and placed it carefully on the grass. Then he began to run wind sprints into center field, walking back to his cap, and sprinting again. He ran with elegance and grace, and some of the fans in Fenway Park turned to watch him, a ballplayer running by himself in the outfield.

They watched him not so much because he may be the finest pitcher in the American League this season, but because he is the finest right-handed pitcher that Boston has had since Tex Hughson and Boo Ferriss right after the war. They have been waiting 20 years in Boston for Jim Lonborg.

In Boston everything in baseball is dated from the seasons when Hughson and Ferriss were pitching, the years of the great hitters—Ted Williams and Vern Stephens and Dom DiMaggio, Rudy York, Bobby Doerr and all the rest—and the great disappointments, the years of the troubles, the teams that won only one pennant, in 1946, despite all their talent. I had cheered and suffered with the Red Sox in those years and, like any Boston fan, I had not forgotten. We had a fierce sense of family pride in the Red Sox. Every year there was a feeling of invincibility about the team, a feeling that it could not possibly lose.

Yet it did. Perhaps the worst year was 1949. One afternoon in early October the Red Sox had a chance to win the pennant by beating the Yankees in New York. We began to line up outside Fenway Park to buy World Series tickets the next morning, and we came with cots and blankets to spend the night. But we went home early, wandering away in dismal little groups through the October dusk. The Yankees had won again.

That was that for 17 years, until this season, when Boston suddenly was a spectacular team again. By some strange alchemy, a group of young players has been transformed into a pennant-contender. Lonborg is 24. Tony Conigliaro, the home-run hitter, is only 22, but he is in his fourth season. George Scott, 23, a brutally strong giant, plays first base with nonchalant grace. Shortstop Rico Petrocelli, 24, runs like a hunchbacked old man, but he has a rifle arm. At 28, Carl Yastrzemski is the old man of the team, and he has been hitting the ball better than any other left-handed hitter in the American League.

As I watched them play that night against Baltimore, it really did not matter that they were beaten badly—Lonborg did not pitch—because all the old excitement was there. The men in immaculate, cream-white uniforms, with red lettering and red-white-and-blue socks, simply looked too good to lose. And then, to make it all perfect, there was Bobby Doerr himself. He had returned to baseball to coach first base for this team. I was back in the family again.

As a Red Sox fan, I had naturally jumped at the chance to do a story on Jim Lonborg. He fascinated me, not just because his record was brilliant (16 and 5 as this story went to press) and not just because of the fact that he had been a premed major at Stanford, an unlikely background for a

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At bay, Lonborg glowers at the next batter and tells his catcher and manager he can get him out. He did.

big-league pitcher even in this age of enlightenment. I wanted to meet Lonborg because he had accomplished what I at one time had wanted to do more than anything else. He had turned the trick—he was pitching for the Red Sox.

I had been a pitcher at Cambridge Latin right outside Boston, and I was good but not good enough to attract any attention. Two years later and 15 pounds heavier, I played for a semipro team around Boston, and one night I struck out 18 men. Shortly afterward I got a summons by phone to report to Fenway Park during the September home stand.

While I rode the subway to the field, I thought about the contract they'd offer me and figured it would probably come to $200 a month. I had no intention of quibbling. I walked to the players' entrance and spoke to a guard, who checked a sheet, grunted and waved me through to a small room. I dressed hurriedly and ran onto the field.

Some scouts were working with a group of players from the metropolitan area. I joined them and threw for about 10 minutes on the sidelines. Then a scout came over and asked if I was ready to throw from the big mound. He pointed to the center of the field. Eyes followed me out, gauging my height, weight and poise.

I threw easily at first, then more strongly as I adjusted to the mound. After about five minutes I began to bear down, to put all my weight behind every pitch. The ball smacking into the receiver's glove sounded like a cannon to me. The coach was watching me—I could feel his eyes. I kicked my left leg high with each windup and came down directly overhand with the fastest pitches I had ever thrown.

Then, behind third base, the scout slowly cupped his hands around his mouth and shouted, "OK, ki-id, now let's see your fastball."

There was nothing I could do. I tried to throw harder, but that was it. Then I glanced over at third base. The scout wasn't watching me anymore. No one seemed to be watching me.

The catcher went to get a new glove. He never came back. After a few minutes I went to the sidelines and waited for someone to put a fatherly arm around my shoulder and give me some words of encouragement. No one did. When nobody even wanted to play catch with me, I went back to the locker room, changed my clothes and went home on the subway without taking a shower.

At that time Jim Lonborg was five years old. He lived in San Luis Obispo, Calif., with his parents and a brother and sister. When he was 10, he played on a Little League team called the Red Sox. In his senior year in high school he was president of the class, a straight-A student and a very mediocre baseball player. (His teammate and good friend was Mel Queen, now a pitcher for the Cincinnati Reds. Queen at one time was married to Lonborg's sister.)

Lonborg earned an academic scholarship to Stanford University and started the premed course, majoring in biology. In the spring of his first year he walked down to the baseball field and asked for a tryout. The coach grudgingly agreed. Lonborg had grown some and added some weight, and suddenly his fastball was exploding. His life began to take on an unexpected dimension.

For two years he pitched in summer leagues for college players, which were subsidized by big-league teams, and then one day in Winner, S. Dak., Bobby Doerr, a scout for the Red Sox, came to town. Boston was offering him $30,000 to sign.

Jim faced a crisis. His father wanted him to continue with his medical career. The Red Sox wanted him to forget it. "I am a physical person," Lonborg told me later. "The things that move me are

Photographs by Ted Polumbaum

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physical things, like striking out a guy, seeing beautiful scenery, or maybe a beautiful woman. I wanted to give baseball two or three years to see if I could make it."

He joined the Red Sox farm team at Winston-Salem, N.C., the next spring. (He would finish his last credits at Stanford during the next off-season.) He rode buses through the deep South, dressed in dirty locker rooms and ate at diners in gray little towns. He made it to Seattle in Triple A ball and was told that he would be brought up to the big team in 1965. Lonborg went off to a six-month Army tour with an unknown shortstop named Rico Petrocelli. The two men spent their days telling each other that neither would fail the test. Lonborg made up small cards and read them to himself every day:

"I have a major-league fastball."

"I can strike out any hitter I have to."

"I can win in the big leagues."

He did, barely. In 1965, his rookie year, he had a record of 9 wins and 17 defeats. The triumphs were few. The first time he pitched against the Yankees, Lonborg had to resist the temptation to go up to Mickey Mantle and shake his hand. He struck out Mantle the first time up. But Mantle hit a home run off him later in the game.

Last year Lonborg reached a turning point during a doubleheader against Detroit. In the first game he was routed by the Tigers. Since he had been going badly, Jim figured that he was about to be shipped back to the minors.

Sent to the bullpen for the second game, he sat in the sun and brooded about his career. In the ninth inning, when the Tigers threatened to tie the score, Lonborg was amazed that Manager Billy Herman called for him. "Keep the ball low on this guy McAuliffe," said Herman. "Make him hit it on the ground so we can get the hell out of here and go home."

Lonborg threw two pitches. The second one was hit on the ground to Petrocelli, and the game was over. Jim Lonborg went straight to his locker and sat down and cried. Herman's faith in him had restored his faith in himself. He finished the season

'I want the hitter to know I might just knock him down.'

at 10–10 and went off to South America to work on his control during the winter months.

The current season did not begin auspiciously. Lonborg should have won an early game at Anaheim, but he began trying to fool the Angels' hitters instead of throwing it past them. ("He was trying to *finesse* them," Dick Williams, the new manager of the Red Sox, told me later.) Tied 1–1 in the bottom of the ninth, Lonborg threw a pitch into the dirt. The ball bounced off the catcher and back toward the mound. Lonborg raced in and picked it up to throw out the runner streaking home from third. Then he dropped the ball. It fell on the grass as the run scored, and Lonborg just left it there and walked slowly into the dugout, where he sat silently while the crowds filed out and the park grew quiet. He kept staring at the ball, still lying where he had left it in the grass. Not even the groundskeepers touched it.

Petrocelli finally came over to him. "Great game Lonnie," he said sympathetically.

Manager Williams overheard the remark. "Great game, hell," he said.

It was after this game that Lonborg stopped trying to think his way out of jams and became a sensation.

We met to talk for the first time at lunch the day after I'd met him at the Baltimore game. He drove up in a canary-colored convertible, parked in a no-parking zone, leaped out and casually handed his keys to an approaching doorman. Lonborg was dressed in a yellow sport shirt and dark-brown slacks; his arms and face were slightly tanned. When we entered the lobby, he was recognized immediately by several people who wanted to wish him well. "Thank you so much," he called back as we retreated down the corridor to a restaurant.

It was 2:30, and the waiter at the door said the kitchen was closed. Lonborg asked for the manager. When he huffed up to the entrance, Jim smiled warmly and said, "I'm Jim Lonborg of the Red Sox. Could we eat something here before the game?" As the manager started to protest, Jim added, "How about some prime rib? That would be just great." The manager succumbed and led us to a corner table.

Lonborg ordered quickly and precisely ("a prime rib, no fat, cut out the bone") and we discussed his short and spectacular career. Jim talked easily about the good life it has brought him. Even today, very few young baseball stars are sophisticated enough to know how to spend the money they are given so suddenly. Lonborg knows how to spend his. If there is a jet set in baseball, he belongs to it. He spoke of his plans to ski at Lake Tahoe this winter. He knew that he could break a leg and ruin his career, but he was unperturbed by the thought. It would not happen.

Boston had turned out to be a fascinating new world for him. He began going to hear the Boston Symphony (Beethoven is his favorite composer), and he took his dates to the Esplanade concerts on the banks of the Charles. "There's more stability here than in California," he said. "I like that. California is sort of crazy."

"Would you settle here?"

"I'm not sure. It would depend on my career, the opportunities."

I asked him what he would do if his arm went bad. "I'd like to work with people that need help, say in the field of medicine," he said. "I don't want to be involved where I have to outthink other people. I don't like to compete with other people where they get hurt or I get hurt."

"But Jim," I interrupted, "you compete every day out on the field."

"Yes, but it's different in baseball. It's a physical thing, where the batter has another chance the next day and so does the pitcher.

"I'd like to do work in the area of laboratory experiments. Those are things I really like to do." Lonborg's voice had risen, and his hands were moving. "In college one of my roommates and I did experiments on the reactions of the gut muscle of a rat, its reaction to different dopes, narcotics, its reaction to certain stimuli. We had a fantastic setup. We had the muscles all fixed up in a saline solution which is natural to its body." Lonborg explained the graphs he used to record the oscillations of the muscle. "It was fascinating," he said.

He thought of something else that obviously had affected him. "When I was in Winner, South Dakota, I got very friendly with a doctor who used to let me watch him operate. I saw him do a hysterectomy. Here was a woman, a real person, and she was cut open right before my eyes. I wasn't any further away than I am from you right now. I was amazed by his skill." Jim shook his head as he remembered the incident.

As we got up to go after lunch, I asked him his game plan for that night. "I'll tell you one thing," he said, "there's no way in the world those Baltimore batters are going to be able to dig in on me the way they did last night. I can't allow it." There was no menace in his voice; he was just making a flat statement.

Lonborg went back to his car in the no-parking zone, and drove off to a movie house. He had gone to this particular theater early this season and then won a game, striking out 12. For all his sophistication, Lonborg returns to the theater before every home game he pitches, no matter what movie is showing. This time it was *Blow-up*.

I went to Fenway Park alone later that afternoon, and a piece of paper, a press pass, gave me the run of a world I had never seen. Every detail jumped out at me. The runway into the clubhouse was clammy with humidity. On a shelf lay a Bazooka Bubble Gum box. In it were two opened

In cozy Fenway Park, Lonborg shows the grip for his fastball to Writer Craig, a onetime would-be pitcher.

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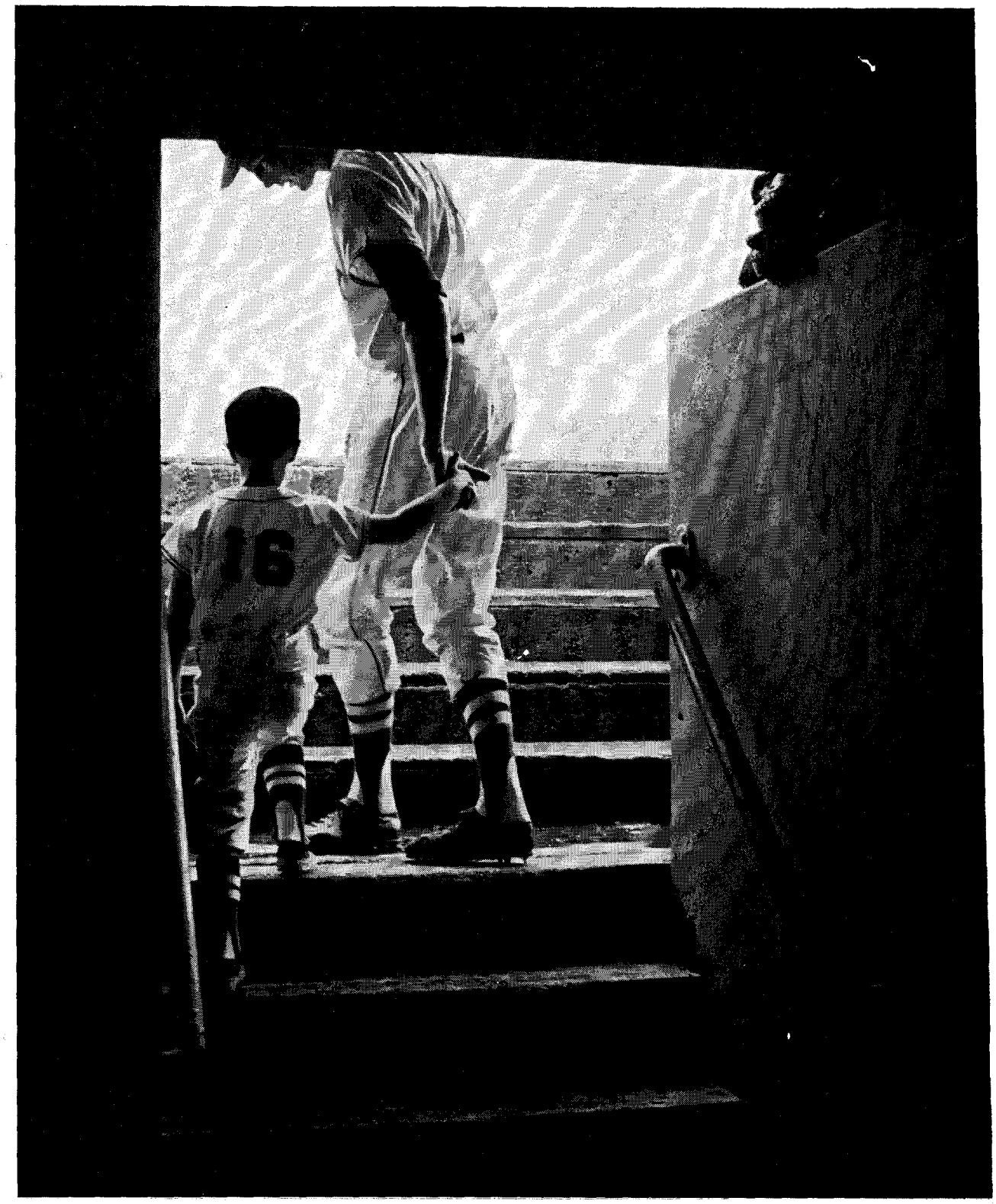
Lonborg leads his nephew, Steve Queen, the son of the Cincinnati Reds' pitcher, onto the field before a game.



cigarette packs for the players who sneak back during the game for a quick smoke.

In the clubhouse naked men sat on stools before their lockers and conscientiously autographed baseballs. One pitcher stood morosely in a whirlpool bath, trying to heal a muscle tear. First baseman George Scott wrestled playfully with a clubhouse boy. Outfielder Tony Conigliaro listened rapturously to a song being played on the radio. He roared with rage when someone turned it down; he had been listening to his own voice recorded for thousands of teen-aged worshipers.

Everyone spoke well of Lonborg, which was to be expected, but I was surprised at the obvious personal warmth that the team felt for him. He was no egghead who stayed by himself. Somehow Lonborg had managed to adjust to the life in the dugout as easily as he had to the life in a Stanford biology lab. The Red Sox had even elected him to be their representative in dealing with the management—a rare honor for any young player.

At 5:50 P.M. Lonborg walked into the clubhouse and prepared to earn his paycheck. After taking batting practice, he went back into Buddy Leroux's training room and lay face down on a table. Despite the screeching radio and singing teammates, Lonborg slept.

At 7:10 he came out hurriedly, his right arm and back coated with a hideous iodine-colored balm that actually glistened under the fluorescent light. He finished dressing, smoothed down his hair and put on his blue cap. Then he picked up his glove and went out to pitch. At the door, someone called, "Let's go, big boy."

He clattered through the tunnel on his spikes toward the bright light at the other end. He could hear, as he always did, the roar of the crowd as he got closer to the opening and the bright lights.

There was already a good crowd in the park, but the fans were still pouring off the subway at Kenmore Square and pushing down the sidewalks to the entrances. The organist was playing *Hello, Dolly!* and there was the same sense of eagerness for the game to begin, and the confidence that the Red Sox would win it, that I remembered from 20 years ago.

Lonborg moved easily through the first few innings. The crowd was even cheering the ball boy as he caught the fouls off the screen behind home plate. In the top of the fourth, Paul Blair came to bat. On the previous night the Baltimore outfielder had homered once and hit that left-field wall another time. He dug into the batter's box and waited, his head out over the plate so that he could see the pitch better. Without changing his expression, Lonborg threw an inside fastball. Blair sprawled on the ground to dodge the pitch. Then he made an easy out.

As the game went on, the Orioles began to hit Lonborg. In the seventh inning, with the Red Sox ahead, 11–5, he was taken out. The applause was generous, but there were a few boos. Lonborg listened only to the cheers. He tipped his hat just before he disappeared into the runway.

The next day the clubhouse turned out to be even noisier than the night before. "Let's go up in the stands and get some quiet," said Lonborg.

Rain was pounding onto the white tarpaulin that neatly covered the infield. We went up under the roofed part of the stands on the first-base side. Nothing moved out on the field. The left-field wall seemed to drift in a shimmering mist.

Across the field, Manager Hank Bauer of the Baltimore Orioles suddenly appeared at the edge of the third-base dugout and stared at the rain. He caught sight of Lonborg and pointed at the left-field wall, an obvious reference to the pitches that the Orioles had hit there last night. But Jim had won and he didn't mind the ribbing. He waved at Bauer, and the two men laughed at the joke.

I brought up the Blair incident. "You said that you wouldn't allow them to stand in against you," I said. "Is that what happened to Blair?" Lonborg nodded.

I pursued the point. "How many men have you hit this year, Jim?"

"Eleven—no, twelve," he said sheepishly.

"But you're not wild?"

"No, I'm not."

He kept going. "Last year Billy Herman told me I had to be more aggressive against the hitters, that I had to start knocking them down to protect myself. All I have to do is do it once or twice to each team, and it will get around the league. I want the hitter to know in the back of his mind that I might just knock him down."

I brought up an incident in which Lonborg had deliberately hit a Yankee pitcher in retaliation for the hitting of a Boston teammate. "When you pick up a ball and deliberately throw it at a batter, it's a very serious matter," he said slowly. "But you have to sometimes. You know Aristotle once said, 'Passion dulls the reason of all mankind.' A reasonable man would not do such a thing. But when passion enters into it, it overrides everything else. . . ." His voice trailed off.

The rain was letting up, and the sun was burning the haze away. Jim went to get dressed. In the seats around us, white-frocked vendors had gathered quietly to eavesdrop on our conversation. They had nobody to sell to because of the rain.

A half hour later Lonborg jumped out of the dugout and jogged along the foul line to the right-field corner. He put down his cap and glove and ran as hard as he could all the way to the center-field wall. He looked like a prep-school boy trying to get in shape for a track meet.

Behind me the crowd was surging into the park for the afternoon game. The vendors were beginning to circulate in the aisles. A bat cracked against a ball at home plate. Fenway Park was coming alive after the rain. In the outfield Jim Lonborg ran and ran. □

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Editorial

A postscript on wildlife

Bil Gilbert writes about wildlife with such an admirable combination of knowledge and love and humor (on page 32 of this issue) that he almost succeeds in the improbable task of convincing us that we feel as he does about this increasingly esoteric subject—that we, too, would enjoy paddling through muggy swamps, or standing by a deserted roadside and listening to coyotes howl, that we would not run from a mountain lion but run toward it in the hope of a closer look. But though we like to think of ourselves as the descendants of a race of pioneers, there are relatively few of us who have actually seen a timber wolf, much less a black-footed ferret, and the number will almost certainly decline with each year's decline in the amount of wilderness and in the number of rural Americans. Much of America is still country, but most of us don't live there any more, for we have pledged ourselves to the denatured life of the cities, where trees are called landscaping and animals are called pets.

The animal life in our cities is by no means negligible, but its existence is quite different from that of the animals that thrive in fields and forests. On the one hand, there are the millions of pets that lead lives so sheltered that they scarcely see the outdoors except from the end of a leash or through the bars of a birdcage. On the other hand, there are hardy and unlovable breeds that, with no help from man, grimly compete for the right to survive in the midst of noise and concrete. New York City alone has approximately eight million rats and uncounted millions of mice. There are alley cats that skulk in abandoned tenements, and fierce squirrels that fight over bits of refuse, and squadrons of bedraggled pigeons that strut through the crowded parks.

It is in the suburbs, where a large share of our urban population actually lives, that the relation between man and animal is the most complex. A few scavengers survive on the fringes here, a few raccoons and possums and rabbits, not quite wild, since there is no room for them to be wild in, but not tame either. Suburbia is a domesticated place, however, and most of its wildlife is equally domesticated. Here Gilbert's basic observations are most sharply true—here the habitat is totally controlled by man, and the existence of animals is totally dependent on man's whim. Those animals that suit his fancy not only survive but flourish, not in the virtual captivity of the city pet but in a kind of comfort unknown in the wilderness. The domestic animals have learned these rules so well that their animal behavior seems little more than a residual tribal instinct, the growl at a stranger, the sniffing of new footprints. The dogs live so intimately with the children, eat the same meals, play the same games, sleep in the same beds, that they not only begin to claim children's prerogatives but seem to think that they *are* children.

In one suburban house, for example, there is a small beagle bitch called Jenny, named in honor of the Kurt Weill heroine who couldn't make up her mind, who seems firmly convinced that she is the sixth child in the family. This entitles her, she believes, to follow the children wherever they go, trying to join in whatever they do. Being a suburban child has its dangers, however. One spring, while the beagle was playing outfield in a neighborhood game of scrub baseball, a carload of teen-agers went careening past and ran her down, breaking her pelvis in three places. The next fall the beagle's childishness got her in trouble again. She tried to board the school bus and was not only pushed off but clipped by an oncoming car. This time a hind leg was broken. Nor are cars the only danger; children themselves can be dangerous. During some kind of a game, the beagle was made "it" by having a rubber band fastened around her tail. After the game was over, the rubber band was forgotten, and the tail became infected. Massive injections of antibiotics had to be pumped into the beagle to save her. As man dominates the environment with his machines, so he can also provide treatments and medicines unknown in the wilderness. The balance of nature here is exactly what man wills it to be.

Because of her broken pelvis, Jenny was compelled to live a life of chastity for three years, but bones eventually mend, and the beagle would be untrue to the laws of suburban living if she failed to take part in the suburbs' basic reason for being: the population explosion. She is hugely fat now, panting and waddling about in the summer heat, still demanding her right to sit in a living-room chair but no longer so eager for games. If she is no longer a suburban child, however, she will soon be that equally typical figure: the young matron.

Few of us know real wildlife the way Bil Gilbert knows it, and the whooping crane remains an abstraction, like the purple cow. But many of us share with animals not simply our planet but our homes. And in these commonplace companions we can see what Gilbert sees in all the exotica of the wilds, a reflection of our true feelings about life itself.

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